

ON

55

THE LIFE AND MIND  
OF PAUL

---

ALPHEUS W. WILSON

The University of Chicago  
Libraries



Gift of the Publisher

*Advent*

**EXHIBIT ROOM**  
**PRACTICAL THEOLOGY DEPT.**  
**UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO**  
**NOT TO BE REMOVED FROM THIS ROOM**



# **THE LIFE AND MIND OF PAUL**

(i)



# THE LIFE AND MIND OF PAUL

---

LECTURES TO THE STUDENTS OF VANDERBILT  
UNIVERSITY, DELIVERED IN MARCH, 1910  
ON THE COLE FOUNDATION

---

BY  
THE REV. ALPHEUS W. WILSON  
SENIOR BISHOP OF THE M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH

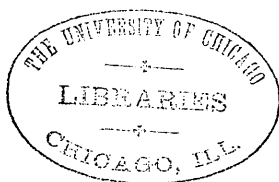
---

NASHVILLE, TENN.  
DALLAS, TEX.; RICHMOND, VA.  
PUBLISHING HOUSE OF THE M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH  
SMITH & LAMAR, AGENTS  
1912



BS2505  
W72

COPYRIGHT, 1912  
BY  
SMITH & LAMAR



Gift of publisher

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
LECTURE I.....	I
LECTURE II.....	18
LECTURE III.....	37
LECTURE IV.....	62
LECTURE V.....	85
LECTURE VI.....	106
LECTURE VII.....	130
LECTURE VIII.....	151



## INTRODUCTION.

---

It is safe to say that no Methodist minister has ever been more thoroughly saturated with the Pauline Epistles than Bishop A. W. Wilson. To use the language of Lord Bacon, he has literally "chewed them and inwardly digested them." They have been his meditation day and night for more than fifty years. Whenever he speaks concerning them, it is with the authority of full and penetrating knowledge. That circumstances have hindered him from giving them exhaustive treatment in book form is a source of deepest regret to the whole Church. The lectures that are presented in this volume bear all the marks of extemporaneous delivery. They are simply the spontaneous outpourings of a great and fruitful mind, caught by a stenographer not too well skilled in such matters, and thus saved from passing into oblivion. Even so they are wonderfully rich and stimulating, and ought to have a wide reading. St. Paul is still the profoundest interpreter of the mind of Jesus, and anything that serves to pass on his thoughts to the world is a blessing of no common value. I count it a great honor to associate my name with that of my honored senior colleague by writing this brief introduction. Long may he linger among us to show us that it is still possible to preach the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven! E. E. Hoss.

NASHVILLE, TENN., June 27, 1912.

(vii)



# THE LIFE AND MIND OF PAUL.

---

## LECTURE I.

THE theme, "The Mind of Paul," . . . is a vast one, in some regards the vastest that could be suggested, not because he stands preëminently as the founder of our Christianity, as some higher critics would say, but because he is the best interpreter of the mind of the Master that we have in history. This theme is not of my selection; it is Dr. Tillett's. I am simply doing what I can to adjust myself to his expectation and desire and to your need. With that understanding I take it up—the mind of Paul as it can be determined from his own utterances and the course of his life.

You cannot judge of the mind of any man unless you take his whole life into account, and especially is this the case when you come to consider the mind of a man who occupied the position that Paul did and has exerted the influence in the world that Paul has. There are no accidents, there are no trivialities in a life like this. Everything is of moment from the very beginning. He himself recognized the fact that all the first period of his life was just as much under divine direction as any of its later stages. "It

pleased God," he said, "who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace." It was not a new thing when he came upon that wonderful vision on the road to Damascus, but a thing that God had prearranged long before.

All the various processes of training and education, moreover, to which he was providentially subjected were a preparation for the place he was to fill in the life of the world and of the Church. So we have necessarily to look as carefully as we can, within the limits allowed, at this preliminary period.

The apostle appears to us first as the official witness at the stoning of Stephen. They "laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul." This was an expression of the real feeling that he had at the time, his actual mind in relation to Christianity; for immediately afterwards a great persecution arose against the Church which was in and about Jerusalem, and Saul became one of the most active persecutors. Laying waste the church, and entering into every house, he haled men and women, dragging them to prison, punishing them, and compelling them to blaspheme. Not satisfied with his work of destruction in Jerusalem, he asked letters from the high priests and went to other cities. It was on his way to Damascus, in pursuance of this commission, that he was arrested in his course by divine power, and the whole trend of his life was changed.

When, in later years, he was a prisoner in the hands of the chiliarch at Jerusalem, he declared (with a good deal of emphasis, too) that he was a native of Tarsus, a citizen of no mean city. He evidently held in high regard the place of his birth, and recognized the fact that he owed something to it. He was not the man to disregard the providential ordering of his life. In many other respects also he looked back upon the scenes in his earlier career as having had a very vital connection with his whole after course as an apostle of Jesus Christ. You remember how, in the Epistle to the Philippians, he boasts of himself as "a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; . . . touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." These things he reckoned as gain to himself, for he says: "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." He never repented nor regretted his relation to any of those things. It was something to him, a very great deal to him, that he was a native of a city like Tarsus—a city that had a remarkable history, into which I shall not enter, as you can find it in almost any of your reference books. But it was a very mixed city, Greek and Asiatic and Jewish. There he came in contact with all forms of life. Now and then there is an expression in his Epistles which indicates that he was not ignorant of the special characteristics that pertained to the Asiatic mind; and his whole utterance shows that he



had been thoroughly steeped in the Hellenism of the time—understood it well and knew how to use it to the advantage of the gospel. But his chief training was not in Tarsus. How long he remained there in his youth, it is impossible to tell; but he himself says that he was brought up in Jerusalem, at the feet of Gamaliel, which is a rather surprising saying. Gamaliel appears before us in one notable instance as an advocate of toleration. When they wanted to inflict the severest penalties upon the apostles for disregarding the order of the Council and preaching Jesus through the city, he said: “Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught”—you need not bother yourselves about it—“but if it be God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.” Upon the further proceedings, however, he seemed to look with indifference, and without protest allowed them to scourge the apostles and send them away. But he was evidently a mild-mannered man, and disposed to give some sort of freedom to the life of those who differed even from the essentials of the Jewish faith.

But Saul of Tarsus had not learned that lesson of toleration from his teacher. He had no compromise to make with anything outside of the strictest sect of the law. He was a persecutor. It was in his blood; it was ingrained in his character. He held

every avowal of anything that was antagonistic to Pharisaism, as he understood it and practiced it, to be blasphemy, transgressing God's law, and, if persisted in, to be punished with death. Nor did he hesitate to carry into practice what he thought and felt. When you look over his after life, it seems even more surprising that he should have been of that sort; for in the end he proved himself to be the most pronounced advocate of toleration and liberty that the world has ever known. Yet there is one feature of his character that comes out from the first and that never changed. I take it from all that he wrote, and from the circumstances of his early as well as of his later life, that he was one of the most intense men who ever lived. He could not hold anything indifferent. When he had what he regarded as truth, it was vital to him, and he meant that it should have its full effect upon himself and upon all upon whom he could bring it to bear. So when he advocated Pharisaism as the supreme form of the old Jewish faith, and himself adhered to the strictest sect of it, it was simply an expression of the very strong conviction which he cherished, that there was no room for anything besides that which he believed to be the one divine truth for men, and for all men.

As a matter of course, under those conditions and with that attitude toward the truth, he had no intercourse, and could have none, with the outside Gen-

tile world. His feeling about it was the same that he expressed in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans: it was a cesspool of all iniquity. The fact that it had departed from the one living and true God opened the way for corruption of every sort, of the flesh and of the spirit; and his earlier experiences in the city of Tarsus, I doubt not, gave full confirmation to the view that he had of the hopelessness of the Gentile state and outlook.

Peter said it was remarkable, considering he had lived always in Galilee, that he could say: "Nothing common or unclean hath ever entered into my mouth." He had been a very strict and strait observer of the Pharisaic law. Paul could not have fallen behind Peter in that respect. He was devoted to the Pharisaic traditions—held them with all the ardor of his being and conformed himself to them. In that attitude he appears before us—a thoroughly religious man after a type that our Lord had denounced most bitterly—and makes his boast of it. Never, in after life even, did he express any regret that he had been identified with it. That was not part of the sorrow that he felt.

I suppose that if he had lived in the Middle Ages he would have been the head and front of the Inquisition. Torquemada would not have surpassed him. Truth, if truth at all, was the only thing for him. Convinced as he was of its absolute necessity for the salvation of men, he himself was ready to die, if

need be, and to inflict upon the opponents of what he regarded as truth the uttermost penalty that the law or custom would allow. He had been saturated with Pharisaic teaching; he had studied in the rabbinical schools; he had associated with the men who were most pronounced in their adhesion to the old faith; and it is not a wonderful thing, when you consider what conscience is, that he could stand before the Council in later years and say with all emphasis: "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." He included his whole life in that statement. The word itself, "I have lived," as we render it, means fairly, "I have lived as a citizen." But that with the Jew was the whole life; for to be a Jew was to be a religious man and to conform to the ethical requirements of the Jewish law in all things. He held himself, then, as he wrote to the Philippians, "as touching the law, blameless."

Hence I submit that here is an exceptional instance of a man. You cannot withhold your admiration from him. To what lengths he would have gone had he not been arrested, it is impossible to say; but that he would have taken high rank and would have pressed his advantage with the Pharisees in their solidarity as a sect and in their influence over the people to the utmost, even perhaps to the accomplishment of a revolution, is hardly to be doubted. He was not a man to rest quietly in the midst of the confusion and turmoil and uncertainty

of the times, and let events take their course. He felt that it was his business to lead the course of things, and to bring not only the Jewish people, but all others who could be brought under Jewish influence, to the acceptance of the truth as he saw it.

Now put to that what is perfectly manifest in all that he has written, that he was a man of very extraordinary genius. We are too fond of attributing everything in that line to special divine endowment for the occasion and to revelation. It is very true that without revelation and without the divine guidance he would not have achieved what he did. But inspiration is not a mechanical process. God did not speak into a phonograph that we might get back exactly what had been spoken. That is not God's way of dealing with men. When he gets hold of a man he takes him for what he is worth, with his own special qualities and endowments, quickens them with the revelation, and then lets the man give utterance to them according to his own ability and individuality.

Saul had this marvelous intellectual power. I do not think he was surpassed by any writer of his own or of later times. The far reach of his mind was the most wonderful thing in all philosophies and in all the literature of his own or of any later age. He never seemed to be content with the limitations that were imposed upon him by the circumstances of life and time, always reaching after the things that were

ahead; and, indeed, in later life, when he exhibited his characteristics to their utmost, he never stopped until he reached the impassable line between the infinite and the finite—between God and men. Words would fail him; all his facility of speech counted for nothing. But even then he would not halt in striving for the unsearchable. In the ecstasy of his great endeavor he cries out: "He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Paul's thinking was of a broader and higher type than that of any other man that I have known or heard of. You must take that into account. I think it was that which specially fitted him for the work he had to do. But there were great contrasts. It is one of the wonders that a man of that type should be held down to the level of the cross, and that by the revelation of the cross that which was largest and broadest and loftiest in his nature should first be brought out in its fullness. I think that if he had been put in the line of statesmanship simply, without any regard to the religious questions, he would have ranked among the first men of his time, perhaps outranked them all; for we have in his mind, as expressed in his writings, an attitude not simply toward a congregation or a Church as we hold or use the term, but toward the entire inhabited world. Whenever he was writing about the great things of the kingdom of God, he had the Roman Empire in his thought; and he was planning with a view to the great achieve-

ment—which he was not destined to see in his lifetime—the identification of the Roman Empire with the kingdom of his Lord. I have no doubt that elemental instincts of that sort manifested themselves in his early life. They were not the product of his conversion; they were only quickened into higher activities and broader life by that supreme transformation. He was one of the exceptional men whom God finds in a dozen or two generations and uses for the accomplishment of unusual work that could not be done by any other kind of man. We have to consider all these things when we are seeking to enter into his mind. It must have been a remarkable progress that he made. He was a student of the rabbinical schools, and he writes to the Galatians that he profited in the Jews' religion above many his equals in age of his own nation. The meaning of it seems to be that he stood at the head of his class. He was far in advance of them all in his knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures and of the rabbinical teachings, and knew how to use them in their application to the common life of the people as no other man did. You will note, too, as you have doubtless in the course of secular history noted, that when a man with such endowments, and with the religious element dominant in his nature, goes out among people and begins to work, even in the higher classes of life, he is likely to bring about a revolution and change the whole order of things.

He establishes a new system, of which he himself is the center. In all probability there is going to be in the after results of such a man's life a sort of regeneration of society. I do not mean the word regeneration in its highest sense as we use it, but a re-creation, a re-molding, a re-formation, not a reformation. Paul was fitted for that sort of thing. No doubt he had it in mind that the prophets who were the immediate representatives of God the Law-giver, who stood at the head of Israel's great economy, and whose influence was unimpaired down to the very last, were the supreme representatives of the legal power of Jehovah himself. Paul was thoroughly versed, not simply in the broad outlines of it all, but in the details, and kept himself in close touch with every advance in every line of thought that affected these great factors in the life of his people.

We can see that clearly enough in what appears in his life; and it is one of the good things for us that no man has ever laid himself open to the world as Paul did, told us all about himself that could be told, and concealed nothing. It was his purpose to let everybody know just what he was from the beginning and to the end. He makes it very clear that even in those early days, before the touch of God had been realized and Christ had come into his consciousness, that he was planning for great things for his people. I have no doubt that in his readings



of the prophets he got some glimpses of the broader destiny of the people. It was impossible that a man of his mold, reading the glowing periods of the Isaian prophecies, should leave the Gentile world out of his account; but like the rest of the pious Jews, whatever may have been the special form it took in his mind, he evidently thought that the time was to come when Israel should be at the head of the nations, and that its dictation should be obeyed in all points touching morals and religion. He had a great destiny marked out for himself, and he had the forces, and he had the furniture, and he had the backing as far as the greatest nation that the world had seen up to that time could give him. He had all that provision and preparation made for him.

Sometimes we think (it is our customary mode of thought, I believe) that when a man is converted there should be an immediate break between him and all his past life; that what has gone before should, in fact, be regarded as of no account. We read passages like the terms of the covenant, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more," and "He hath separated us from them as far as the east is from the west," and we think that the whole of a man's old life is so bound up in sin and corrupted by it that it must simply be blotted out and never thereafter looked upon as of any moment. But that is to put God out of all the early stages of a man's life; and God is never out of any man's life

until he assigns him his final place. From the very beginning he is in the life of every one of us, and we are bound to recognize the fact that these things are at least checked, regulated, ordered so as to meet whatever may lie in the future for man, and make it possible for him to answer the demand that God shall make upon him. So it was here. As I quoted awhile ago, Paul was separated to this business from his birth, and called by God's grace to it. He never forgot that he was a Jew; never forgot that he was a Roman citizen; never forgot that he was a Pharisee; never forgot that he had from the very beginning pledged all the power of his being and all the resources at his command for the maintenance of what he regarded as the truth; that he had lived in all good conscience before God.

This is perhaps the most striking aspect of his life. It comes out more distinctly than it does in the life of almost any other man. He himself lays it bare, and for that special purpose. It was part of his faith in God in later years that, whenever a man came to love God, all things were to be made to "work together for good;" and he was not going to leave out what might prove to be the largest part of the man's life, and certainly what, apart from revelation, was the most influential part as far as the normal man was concerned. For the early years are what make the man, after all. If he can be brought, while he is young, through the processes

of training that will settle him in convictions and in methods of thought and life that may be made available for the right and for the truth, you may pledge—I was going to say—God for the fulfillment of his highest destiny. If you forget all this, let him shift for himself where he is subjected to the caprices of the society about him, without any definite purpose and without any settled training, as a matter of course you will get nothing great and nothing high out of him. But in cases like this God takes very good care that the man shall have the sort of training that is needed for the work which he is to do. He took Saul from the time that he was born, and saw to it that he had Tarsus—that is, Greek and Asiatic and Roman life—about him, with its idolatries in full view, that he might see all that there was of it in its hideousness, with its fearful effects in its individual and social and national life. Then he directed his steps to Jerusalem, that with his intense nature he might become identified with the Pharisaism of the time and illustrate it in its highest form, and that he might become a devotee of a creed and a faith that, after all, was not the worst thing in the world (it was the only saving element in the life of the world at that time); and he put him there with Gamaliel, whose counsels undoubtedly must have had tremendous influence upon him, or he would never have referred to him as he did (brought up at his feet, he said). God directed

all these things just so that this special training of his faculties, his sight and his insight, his social qualities and his religious faculty—everything that pertained to the normal Jew—might be put in the best possible position and trained to the highest point of power for the uses to which it should have to be put. And so he went through that early period.

Paul was a Pharisee of his time, to speak of him even in the terms that the Lord used, and we reckon him by that fact; but, after all, there was a saving element even in Pharisaism. Our Lord's charges against it were traditionalism, formalism, and hypocrisy, and he drove these charges home. I think they refer mainly to the leaders of the party and to the leaders in Jerusalem more than anywhere else. There was a freer, wider life in Galilee than there was in the city of the great king. At the headquarters of the faith they were rigid, uncompromising, and unbending, and never allowed that there could be anything out of Pharisaism that was worth considering. Sadducees and Pharisees under the Herodian administration effected a sort of *modus vivendi* (agreed to live together in peace); but the power, among the people, was really of the Pharisees.

I should not charge Paul with formalism or with hypocrisy. That would have been incompatible with what he said about himself and with everything we know about his early life. He was ready to express

himself with the utmost frankness and freedom on all the points that concerned his faith, and he was ready to carry into effect openly and daringly whatever he believed on all these matters. As to traditions, I have no doubt that he held them, as all the Pharisees did, and came to regard them as part of the genuine revelation of God. Was there anything better than that in the way of training for such work as he had to do? I doubt if any of the schools of the world—or, if a selection could have been made, of university professors from all parts of the world, taking the best men that they could furnish—could have put him under a training that would more exactly have fitted him for what he had to do. We shall see something about that in later discussions. But the man stands before us a complete, lifelike figure; a Pharisee of the highest order; a young man furnished and equipped for any course in life that he might choose to pursue, with an intellect unsurpassed in its depth, acuteness, breadth, far reach, with a personal power that was not equaled by any among the leaders of the nation or any that came after him, and that put him in the forefront whenever and wherever he appeared.

A young man in such conditions, with the world before him and with this mighty power and agency of God behind him; the traditions of the centuries, and the revelations of prophecy, and the demonstrations of the Spirit, and the whole marvelous history

of the people filling him and taking possession of him—with all these behind him and with the world before him, nobody can tell to what height he would have attained or what work he would have accomplished had he remained simply Saul of Tarsus. But the world would have been another thing to-day.

## LECTURE II.

I READ from the book of Acts, chapter xxvi., verses 13-18: "At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.\* And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive

---

\*"To kick against the pricks" refers rather to the fact that his life had been in direct contradiction to the divine purpose. He had been "separated from his mother's womb" to the one work, and the entire movement of his life had been in antagonism to this. In the after course of his ministry, no doubt, Stephen's words of wisdom and power recurred to him and suggested the staple of such speeches as he delivered at Antioch of Pisidia.

forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

This is treated commonly as an exceptional event, and not to be relied upon as belonging to the normal course of Christian procedure. I am not so sure that such a view is correct. It is exceptional for the reason that there was an exceptional man involved; but it was simply climacteric of the whole process of conversion in every case. Conversion must begin with the revelation of Jesus Christ, whether that revelation be made gradually or suddenly; and in every case it must issue, just as this has done, in an appreciation of Jesus Christ and absolute subjection to his person. You will find that in that regard the apostle Paul is not alone. Peter speaks with frequency and with emphasis of the revelation of Jesus Christ. He regards it as the supreme requirement of the human soul, and promises it in its fullness as the last result of the movement of the Christian life.

Here it comes to a man who, as I was going to say, deliberately (I don't know that I ought to use that term) turned away from Jesus Christ. We shall never be able to know exactly how much about Christ he knew in the days before his own conversion. His life must have run alongside that of the Son of Man for some considerable time; but whether he ever saw him in the flesh or heard words from his mouth at all, we cannot say. We only know that if he did hear him, if he did see him, he only had a



conviction of the intense and irreconcilable antagonism between his own faith and the teaching of Christ emphasized, accentuated in his own consciousness; and his determination to persecute the Church to extinction deepened.

It is perhaps a paradoxical thing to say, and yet it is true, that there was but one thing in the life of this man up to this time with which he could be charged as having done wrong, and that was in his relation to Jesus Christ. In all other respects he was like the young man who came to Jesus asking what he should do to have eternal life. Christ's answer was: "Keep the commandments." "I have kept them all, from my youth up," was the reply. And that included, according to one of the evangelists, to love his neighbor as himself. Certainly in the after part of his life, when he was reviewing his early course and career, Paul did not hesitate to say about himself that, as touching the law, he was blameless. That was as much as could have been said of any prophet before his time, or of the lawgiver himself; but our Lord, when he taught among men, shifted the whole burden of responsibility from the man's relation to the law to his relation to himself. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin." "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin." The one thing that he regarded as essential, and the one thing

that was to be secured by his ascension, was the gift of the Spirit, which should convict the world, whether it wanted to be convicted or not, of sin, righteousness, judgment, the three great factors in human history and destiny—of sin, because they believe not in me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father and they see me no more; of judgment, because the Prince of this world is judged. On that side, and that side only (I do not hesitate to say it), this man was found at fault. He was as honest in his convictions as any man that ever lived. He was profoundly religious after the style of the highest form of religion known to that time. He was devoted to his Church. His God was the God of the prophets. He had made no mistake in that. Jehovah, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, was recognized by him as the supreme Lord, and was his God. He knew no other. Yet the moment came when, under the revelation made to him from another sphere of things, not from the heart of Judaism, not from any of the rabbinical schools, not from his researches into the old prophetic sayings (afterwards he used them, the very sayings that were applied to his Master as applicable to his own life and work)—not from any of these, but directly out from the mid-heaven, amidst the splendor of a light above the brightness of the Syrian sun at midday (and nobody knows what that is who has not traveled under that sky and felt the power of that sun as it blazed down

upon the white sands), and under its shock, he fell to the earth. While thus humiliated and broken down in the utter feebleness of his humanity, there came to him that word from heaven in the old, familiar, sacred dialect: "Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

I suppose no man ever received a more tremendous shock—persecuting the splendors of the heavenly life, persecuting the Utterer of words whose tones are as thunders of God, mightier than the still, small voice of the prophet, that reach the inner chambers of consciousness and compel the attention of the man. Persecuting! "Who art thou?" "I am Jesus." That was all. That was all he needed. If that was Jesus, most assuredly this whole course of his had been utterly and hopelessly wrong. No use to talk about how conscientious he had been. It was not worth while to tell him that he had relied upon the experience and testimony and teachings of the old, thoroughly religious party still existing among the chosen people. It was not worth while to remind him that with all sincerity he had searched the Scriptures of God and had tried to find out the truth, and had come to the truth that this Nazarene was a Christ who had threatened the destruction of the nation. As to that, he stood just where Caiaphas the high priest did. It was not worth while to tell him of that. The only supreme fact now was that this revelation from the eternal Lord was a disclosure of

the whole work of his past life. Stephen's death was a murder, in which he was a participant; haling men and women from their homes to prison and death was an outrage upon God as well as upon humanity; and his commission from the chief priest to go into foreign cities and find men and women there and bring them down to Jerusalem, that under cover of the law they might be punished—all that was simply an infamy not to be condoned, only to be repented of. Certainly conscience was involved in it. "I verily thought I ought to do many things contrary to this Jesus of Nazareth." Honesty of purpose! "I have lived," he says years after, "in all good conscience, not in your sight simply, but before God. I have never violated a known law. I have never departed from any path of rectitude that was made plain before me. I have done my utmost to comply with every requirement of God." What more did the Master need? Only the one thing needful. But, mind you, a man of that sort, with rooted convictions, and with a cultivated conscience, and with extraordinary endowments by nature as well as by training, and with all the advantages that he had had of association with the highest and best of his people, whom he would be bound to condemn by this new life—a man like that can be moved only by just such a revelation as was made to him. You might have preached to him until the day of his death with the eloquence of Apollos, with the

intense feeling of Peter, and with the gentleness and deep insight of the apostle John. It would have had no influence upon him. He would have cried out in regard to each one of them, "The man is not fit to live," as the mob afterwards cried about him. Nothing of that sort would have affected him. It must be a revelation, clear-cut, coming right out of the heart of the heavens, from the very presence of the throne. Paul stood head and shoulders in all his intellectual and spiritual capabilities above all the men of his time, however they may have been trained; and standing there as he did, with his view of all that lay below him, nothing but the reach from above could have touched him and made him feel that his life must be radically changed. That was what came to him.

Men say he was prepared for it by other things. You could not prepare a man of that sort. They say his conscience was pricking him about Stephen's death, that the echo of Stephen's word he heard in his own ministrings, and he was gradually being brought to the point of full preparation for such a revelation. He never hints at that. He says emphatically that he thought he ought to do these things against Jesus of Nazareth. And when Luke reviewed his course, he did not intimate that there was a solitary doubt in the mind of the apostle or the faintest suspicion that he might be wrong; but enraged—"exceedingly mad against them" are his

words. In such a state of mind as that, doubt was impossible and regret could not have entered. Madened against them, he delivered them to prison, and with threatening and slaughter he went forth on his mission of persecution and extinction. There was no hesitancy on his part and no questioning as to the right of his course; and it took more than an apostolic vision, more than the persuasive power of eloquence, and more than the appeal to the word spoken by prophet and lawgiver—more than could ever be furnished on earth. It took the voice from heaven to move him, and you will find that confirmed in one striking feature of the man's life. From that time on he paid very little attention, as far as matters of this sort were concerned, to anything that went on about him. He didn't ask Peter for his experience, and glean something from it to help him on. He was three years in Arabia in converse with his Lord, getting all he could from him by revelation, and in no other way. He didn't take up the great facts of Christian history and deduce from them the lessons of life that we are so fond of using and applying in our time. Nothing of that sort. He drew out of his own personal experience and out of his immediate discernments of the unseen and eternal things. He himself said that he looked not at the things which were seen, but at the things which were not seen. He did not go back even to his Lord's life. He never refers to a miracle of his except the resur-

rection, and that was involved in the revelation he had. He never touches any of the marvelous lines of his teachings or uses them as his text. Once there is a citation of a word of Christ that is recorded nowhere else, which he gives to the elders of Ephesus at Miletus. But for all that belonged to his own personal experience, for all the range of truth which he taught in his Epistles, and for everything that pertained to the welfare of the Church of God, he looked out yonder. O, this vision opened the heavens to him, and they were never closed! You may shut him up anywhere in the dungeon; you may toss him over the raging seas of the Adriatic; you may fling him in the midst of the maddened mob at Lystra; you may do what you like as to the flesh, but his eyes are open and he sees and knows and is satisfied, and nothing else would ever have satisfied him.

As I said, if it was an exceptional revelation, it was because the man was exceptional; for I know nothing like him in history, apostolic or other. The other apostles were brought by gradual process of training by the Lord himself, by the Lord incarnate, to their belief in his person. They stood with him on the Jordan when John baptized him; they heard John's testimony to him; they followed him that afternoon, and spent the evening with him and listened to his wonderful voice, the charm of which never left them; they trudged with him along the

ways of Galilee and Judea ; they watched him, a weary and wayworn Man ; and as wonder after wonder in his person, life, utterances, and work disclosed itself to them, they began to get some glimmering of what he was, until the searching question came when they were withdrawn from the great multitude with all its excitements : "Who say ye that I am?" Then Peter answered : "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." He really did not know what his own answer included ; for directly afterwards he tried to restrain the Lord from the offering of himself, which he himself said was essential to the maintenance of his character and the fulfillment of his work as "the Christ, the Son of the living God." They went wearily after him, and became despairing when that tragedy of the universe, the sign of life for the world, the cross, was uplifted before them. They turned away hopeless from the sight, and it was hard to bring them to the conception, to the realization, of his new life when he came in his risen form and stood among them ; and then, after all that, it required the baptism from on high to work within them the complete and final conviction that this Jesus, but man still, God has exalted to his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour. Paul never went through all that. I do not think he needed to go through it. He had a struggle, undoubtedly. When he had seen that vision, the first thing that must come to his mind was, How shall I reconcile that with Calvary? How is it



that he who sits on the throne is the same who hung there tortured, bleeding, agonizing, dying? How is it that he sitting there is the same who was laid in a human tomb, wrapped in the graveclothes that men should furnish, waiting there at the mercy of mere men until God should bid him rise? How did that happen? was the question with him. He had to reconcile these two tremendous facts in his personal experience. He knew that the Jesus whom he had persecuted had been crucified. He knew that Jesus the Nazarene sat on the throne at the right hand of God. How do you put them together? He knew that Jesus carried the cross up there. For three years in the Desert of Arabia undoubtedly he struggled with that question until he brought out those magnificent expressions on the meaning of it all, which his own experiences and the revelation of the Son of God had taught him for the world's behalf. O, men are trying to set it aside now, and think they know more about it than this man did, and that we can get wiser theories and deeper insight into God's ways than he had because he lived so long ago. O, sir, when you stand on the mount of visions, and look through the rifted heavens, and see the splendors of the throne, and hear the voice of the risen Son of God, we shall give heed to your new notions, and not until then. We will take Paul as he stands as the best representative and expression of the grand, fundamental fact that Christ died and rose from the dead, and that

he ever sitteth at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven as our Lord and our Saviour.

You will note another thing about this: it is not the man simply and only, but it is the man whom God has chosen for specific work, and all of whose training up to that time had been directed to that end. He himself said that God separated him from his mother's womb to this end, and that meant that the whole direction of his life had been under the restraining and controlling hand of God. It was a necessity that he should see and understand sin. He never would have known what the cross meant but for that. It was a necessity that he should come into some of those difficulties and roughnesses and, I may say, crudenesses of Pharisaic life. They were the things that polished the man and trained him. There never was a man who went out into the apostolic or any other ministerial life who was so thoroughly prepared by the whole course of training he had received for the special work that he had to do.

We take, for example, the character and mission of Peter. It was his privilege to open the door of faith to the Gentiles, and he did it when he admitted Cornelius. Yet called as he was to this high service, had it not been for the special revelation of that hour and the compulsion laid upon him, he never would have preached to Cornelius; and if he had not been brought by that compulsion into a comprehension of a larger life for the gospel than he had

anticipated or wanted, he would not have stood up in the Council at Jerusalem and vindicated Paul's course of freedom for the Gentile Church. He receded from it as far as he dared when he was with Paul at Antioch afterwards, and he stood for him in the Council simply because the requirement was upon him. He had been chosen to give the gospel to the Gentiles, and he could not by any act of his take it back again. Paul did not give it to the Gentiles in the first instance, but he was the only man of the whole apostolic college who was fit to make it the world-wide message of Christ. To give the gospel to the Gentiles—he felt that to be his mission. Now, that is not conjecture; it is just what is said here by the Lord: "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister [an official minister, that word means] and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee." It required special fitness and training for that sort of a thing. Any one of the apostles could have been an apostle to the circumcision, and Paul as well as any of them, or better, perhaps. If he had confined his activities to the Jewish circle of life, they would not have persecuted him in Jerusalem; they would not have hounded him to his death. They would have let him go on preaching Christ, saying: "That is the sort of Christianity we want to

graft on Judaism. We are willing to take that supplement to it." But Paul was not that sort of a man. When he saw that vision and heard that voice, he became conscious immediately that the world's restrictions must be thrown off. The man Jesus, sitting up there, is not going to be bound by Pharisaical limitations nor by Jewish demands. He is the Lord of the whole earth, and there is not a people or nation or family anywhere that is not entitled to some share in this magnificent revelation that has come to him. "I have appeared to thee." For this purpose the word comes to him. "I have not simply sent a message; I have not taught you through other apostles. I intend that you shall have such burden upon you as you can get only by your immediate intercourse with myself. You must know me as I am before you can speak out this word in all its breadth and in all its fullness of requirement and application."

So Jesus appears to him. Nothing less than that would have sufficed for such a work. For, as I told some of you yesterday, this man was not simply an ordinary circuit preacher going about to deliver his message with reference to the salvation of a single soul here and there, or of a community here and there, but he had the Roman Empire in his view and the world-wide gospel before him. He was a statesman of the kingdom of heaven. He wrote out its constitution, inaugurated all its sessions, and organized it upon the basis of eternal things—the basis

of Jesus Christ risen from the dead and ruling from the throne. It was this breadth of mind and character of the man that set him out as the special agent of God for this peculiar work, the work which he only of all that apostolic college could have done. Others came in where he had labored and carried on the work, watering where he had planted, teaching where he had given the rudiments. But he went where no other man had laid a foundation. He was not going to build upon other men's foundations; he intended to do his own specific work just where it had not been done by anybody else. And when it came to the critical period and purpose of his life, he must go to Rome, not because the gospel had not reached there (the laymen of the Church had carried it there long before), but he must go there because that was the heart and head of heathendom, of the Gentile world. When he writes to Timothy about his appearance in the Imperial City, he says: "Everybody forsook me. I stood alone. But the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me, so that the gospel was fully preached, and all the Gentiles [tremendous word!] could hear." All the Gentiles! And he uses that bold expression, that marvelous figure in the fifteenth chapter of Romans, where he tells of himself as ministering priest, ministering the gospel to the Gentiles, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable to God. As the priest he takes the whole Gentile world in his arms and offers

it up to God. Who else could have done it? and how could he have done it unless he had had such a revelation as this?

Later in the history of the Church, Paul was set aside largely. His freedom and his religious experience were not compatible with the domination that Rome intended to establish over the conscience and the life of man, and it could not afford to make his testimony the finality for the Christian Church and the Christian world. There was one man over yonder on the shores of Africa who saw more profoundly into his meaning and worth than any of them, and Augustine became in a large sense the special representative of Paul in Christianity. But Rome made Augustine a saint, and paid no further heed to him. His teaching was not embodied in the theology of Rome, nor is any of it incorporated in the Romish creed. The Jansenists took it up, and would have followed it to its logical conclusion; but they were persecuted by the Church and destroyed. It was not until the Reformation came and broke the way for release from the shackles of Romanism, and men began to look to the true source of life and to lift their eyes for the vision of the Son of God, and bent their ears to hear his proclamation of love and liberty to the captives, and refused to let go the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free—it was not until those later days that Paul took his rightful place in the world. And to-day he stands out

as the nearest approach to the mind of his Lord, the best exposition of his meaning in the cross and in the resurrection, and the only organizer of the spiritual life and the doctrinal truth of the Church. He can be depended upon to omit nothing and to add nothing. The freest man, after that moment, of his day, the man charged with the heaviest responsibilities, and the man who pronounced himself the slave of Jesus Christ, not of the apostles, by him alone to be ordered—no authority on earth can say what he shall do and what he shall say; but any whisper that comes from the throne he will give heed to, and any service demanded from the throne he will perform, no matter what it costs.

Take these things all together now. Here is his personal experience—such an experience as, I dare say, no other man in Christian history has gained, but such an experience as no other man in Christian history was fitted for and that no other man in Christian history needed for the purpose for which God wanted to use him. This man required it. Nothing else would have saved him. His work demanded it. He could not have the impetus or the wisdom and the breadth for his work without it, and it was this that set him apart emphatically, as all the other apostles confess, the apostle to the nations. You can read it all in this light. He was not simply converted at the moment when that flash came upon him. That was personal, individual, profound, thorough. But

he was made, sealed, ordained an apostle of Jesus Christ at that same moment; had been separated to it long before. But now the final sealing comes, and all the energy and intentness of the man's nature, all this marvelous training by which he could direct every faculty in the way it must go to reach the goal that he had in view, all this experience of the past which disclosed to him so fully the points of power and the points of weakness in the path that he had left—all this, gathered up in his person, was now to be turned to use for this newly discovered Lord. Out upon the old Pharisaism! "O my people, my heart's desire and prayer to God for you is that you may be saved! You have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. Henceforth if you will not give heed to me, I will turn to the Gentiles with a bleeding heart, with streaming eyes, and trembling in every limb with weakness and fear, turned away from the home that I love, the people I have cherished, and give myself to the world outside, this vast Gentile world. There are possibilities for Christ there that I cannot realize at home, and he must be glorified and magnified. For me to live is Christ. O, I am ready to die for his name anywhere and at any time!" He does not say, "For me to live is to live a Christian life," but, "For me to live is Christ." (He never uses "Christian." The name was given at Antioch, because, I suppose, he had been preaching Christ as nobody else had done.



He never uses that word, but says "Christ." He identifies himself with Christ.) "The mystery of Christ is in you. I know Christ and his resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering. Christ is all in all." And Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, henceforth has no mind but that of Christ. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh [this outer life of earthly relation and labor] I live by the faith of the Son of God, not my own; Christ lives in me, and it is his—the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

### LECTURE III.

IT is a matter of prime importance to us to know just what effect the revelation which had come to Paul had upon his relation to the world, to the Jew first and to the Gentile next. Naturally our supposition is that there would be a radical change; you might call it an alienation of the man from his old associations. He had entered upon a new line of life between which and the Jews there had been exhibited antagonism of the most pronounced and apparently irreconcilable type. It is true that a great many of the Jews—at one place in the Acts it is said myriads of them—had been converted to the faith of Christ, but they were what have been called Jewish Christians. They held to the law and to the necessity of the maintenance of the law in order to obtain salvation, and never reached the point that Paul attained at the very outset, that Christ alone was sufficient; that he was not to be regarded simply as a supplement to the law, not merely as a fulfillment of prophecy for the Jewish race, but that he was to be all and in all to Jew as well as to Gentile.

We understand from our scripture, our New Testament scripture particularly, that in the Jewish estimate there were but two classes of people, the Jews and the Gentiles. They made no distinction

between the various orders of Gentile life as far as the fundamental characteristics were concerned. Of course there were some among the freer order of Jews who appreciated what was best in the Hellenic life and culture, who knew something of the Grecian philosophers, and were ready to avail themselves of a somewhat larger intercourse with the outside world than was admissible to the strictest sects of the Pharisees. But as a class the Jews held themselves absolutely aloof, and all the rest of the world was under God's ban. They might possibly find deliverance if they would become in a sense Jews, proselytes, outer court worshipers; but they never could have been so identified with the Jewish people that they could be partakers in full of the inheritance which God had promised to be the portion of the children of Israel. Paul in his early days was in full sympathy with that Jewish attitude and thought; he had no sympathy with Gentilism in any form. It is not much to be wondered at when we recall the common life of the heathenism at that time, the idolatry and the viciousness that was the inevitable result of idolatry everywhere, even among the most highly cultured and the best-thinking men of the times. And he held in his early days, as all the rest of the Jews did, that they were the sole possessors of the truth of God, and that they alone had the right of access to communion with God.

We must not forget that, in a sense, they were

right. Our Lord himself, talking with the Samaritan woman, gave this intimation of the fact. He taught her: "We" Jews "know what we worship;" "you" Samaritans (and they were better than the common run of Gentiles) "worship you know not what." And, further, he adds emphatically: "Salvation is of the Jews." So we cannot set aside their claim as a mere idle boast and a matter of self-conceit. They had a tremendous history behind them to back up their claim. They traced their course of life to men who were preëminent in the world's history, not in the way that the philosophers of Greece and the warriors of Rome and the builders of those old civilizations were, but they were preëminent in their conception of God and in their understanding of what the knowledge of God required of men. Abraham, most majestic figure of the old patriarchal time, a prophetic power in the race; David, whose lofty flights of song touched nearer to the celestial airs than any ever sung, whose rapt utterances have been repeated through the ages ever since and have become household words and cherished expressions of the Church of God; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel—there are none in any race to compare with men like these; there are none who have left their imprint upon the generations to follow as they have done; there are none besides whose moral quality stands out as a sort of heroic element, battling with the corruptions and vices of the world and giving the

full promise, in the midst of the ruin that had been wrought by sin, that there would be redemption for the race or for any part of it. The Jew held that these belonged to him. They were of his nation, of his tribe, of his family. It was a household of saints; and they claimed that to these and such as these, as the representatives and leaders of Judaism, Jehovah, the only living and true God, made himself known as he did not to any others. Perversions and errors and blunders and evils of the grossest form had sprung up in the course of their history. They had even degenerated into idolatry. The curious thing is that while they claimed the right to enter with the nations about them into the worship of false gods, they never allowed themselves to be utterly cut off from the worship of Jehovah. They mingled the two. The altars of the false gods of the surrounding nations at various periods of their history were built in the sacred place—the temple of the gods alongside of the altar of Jehovah. But when you talked to the Jew or inquired into his mind in regard to these things, he would invariably (he might have been a vicious man and might have been an idolater) tell you that Jehovah had entered into covenant with his people, and, whatever they might do, as long as they recognized Jehovah at all they were entitled to all the benefits of that covenant. It got to be in the course of time a stupid sort of faith, a blind, dead thing. They forfeited the vital elements

in it by their obtuseness and their failure to recognize what lay back of all this provision and arrangement for their benefit. They became a wooden, insensate people, and in the time of our Lord his charges against them were not only perfectly true as he made them, but they were so preëminently true that the name of God was blasphemed among the Gentiles because of them. Yet they were the only people on earth that kept the name and the quality of the eternal God in actual thought and life among them. They were widely separated by that fact from all other nations of the earth. You might turn to the most cultured nations of antiquity, and just at the point of highest culture they developed the greatest corruption; and their culture could not and did not save them. They had no God. The nearest approach that they could come to it was that mysterious altar inscribed to an unknown god, which Paul saw in Athens; and outside of that there was hardly a hint anywhere that there was recognition of the living and the true God. There may be exceptions, of which we shall speak by and by; but it is true of the great body of the Gentile world, and the Jews could rightfully claim that they were the sole keepers of the supreme truth of the only God. It was written in the forefront of the only ethical law that was ever promulgated authoritatively and officially. It was inscribed upon their altars. It was branded upon them by the fact of circum-

cision as a necessity of the household and of the individual life, and it met them at every turn of their history. They were compelled to recognize the marvelous opportunities that had been given them and which were the revelations to them of the presence and working of the only living and true God among them; and in those respects they show to the world a history such as no other people, no other family upon the face of the earth, could exhibit.

The Babylonian captivity intensified all this feeling and led to a series of endeavors to form rules that should crystallize the morality that was based upon the existence and rule of the only God, for the benefit of all the people in all their relations in life, even the most minute. Thence came a system of casuistry elaborated in the rabbinical schools, upon which they exhausted their intellectual forces and wasted away their spiritual energy, and that became the representation of the Jewish life in the time of our Lord and of the apostle Paul. He said of them, as you remember, in the Epistle to the Romans: "I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge." They had lost the old faith in the living Jehovah, had substituted for it a mechanical conception of God, and had forfeited their true relation with God by virtue of their substitution of these subtleties of the human intellect for the old and legal truths of the Mosaic institute. That was, in brief (we cannot go into details in a

matter of that sort now), how the case stood when this marvelous change took place in the mind and character and life of the apostle Paul. He had been identified with the Jew in his understanding and his aims and his expectations. He was, perhaps, a more honest man than most of them. The terms that our Lord applied to the great body of Pharisees could not certainly have been applicable to him. He could never have used the words about himself that he did had it been so. But at the very point where his Jewish character comes to its climax and asserts itself with the most pronounced emphasis in his persecution of this sect that had come out of Judaism and was yet, as he felt and saw, antagonistic to Judaism the old faith loses its hold upon him. There is a new revelation, and he comes to a conception of God, mediated through Jesus Christ, which was altogether foreign to every notion of religion and of the religious life that was held by the old teachers and by all the people, Sadducees as well as Pharisees. The break was complete, and there could be no reconciliation between them.

What effect was that to have upon his relation to his people? You must remember, in the first place, that he never changed his attitude toward the law. It was ever with him, to the very last, a divine law. It was holy, it was good, it was spiritual. It had the highest qualities that attached to any creed, or could attach to any creed, among them. It was not a mere



evolution from the conditions and through the processes of ordinary human history; to the last he held it to be God's gift to the people. It was not a product of the wisdom of the ages; it started before the ages had begun to run their course, and at the very outset it was God's predetermined way for the life of them that believed in him and expected to gain the benefit that was to be realized through fellowship with him. To the very last the old mystic insight and prophetic anticipations and revelations, and the marvelous events in the history of the nation, were definite and real things in his estimate; and in that sense he never ceased to be a Jew. He did not even throw off the observance of the Jewish ritual. It was perfectly clear to him (as a matter of course he could not have failed to see it) that in the process of time it would decay and vanish away; but he held that every man that was circumcised was bound to keep the whole law. He was never charged with any violation of it except by false witnesses when they wanted to find occasion of offense and bring him before the Roman governor. His brethren of the Council at Jerusalem said to him very frankly: "These Jews say you have apostatized and live as the Gentiles do. We know it is otherwise. If you will follow the course we indicate, they will learn that you are still a Jew who observes the law as faithfully as they do." And he didn't question it; he admitted the fact. I suppose that up to the day of his death,

as far as it was possible, in all his wanderings and amidst the calamitous conditions of his life, he maintained his old habits of service and ritual observance, so that he stands to the last as a Jew. Nor did he underestimate his people in their relation to the new form of life that he expected to prevail in the world. "What advantage then hath the Jew? . . . Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed [unaltered] the oracles of God." They are the depositaries of the authoritative utterances of divine truth, and to them alone we must look for whatever record of God's will is left among men. That is their privilege, their prerogative, and that is their duty and their responsibility. When he expands upon the same theme afterwards, in his intense desire to show his estimate of his own brethren, he says: "To whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came." He was never ashamed that he was a Jew. He regarded it as the prerogative of his life that he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and he proclaimed the fact. You will find it in almost every letter that he wrote. He insisted that he was identified with his people of Israel, and that in all the course he pursued he was simply carrying out the purpose which God had in view through this **his** chosen people.

"Now this I say," he wrote, "that Christ is the minister of the circumcision." He felt that he belonged to that class. First of all, the minister to them, "to confirm the promises made unto the fathers;" but he added to it the sequel that the Jews had lost sight of: "And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy." The Jews were the first recipients of his divine bounty; but it was the purpose of God, even in his original word to Abraham, that all the families of the earth, through him, should be blessed and made partakers of these benefits. So you have to look at him in that light. He was a Jew, and what of experience he had on his way to the higher life he himself depicts under Jewish forms in that marvelous seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. He tells you there how the law had come to him. It is the very word, the commandment of God, which stirred in him elements of his spiritual life and made him conscious of the fact that somehow he had gone away from God and lost his hold upon the diviner things of life. He sought to recover himself by the process of law, and found that it was impracticable and impossible. By the works of the law, he realized in his own personal experience, no flesh can be saved; and he brought out from the old order of procedure, under the requirement of law, and demonstrated from his own effort and in the course of his own struggling, the futility of any legal process. He realized in his

personal experience the great fact that the law, magnificent as it was as a revealer of God's ethical nature and as disclosing the need of man and showing his guilt, and great as it was as the educator of the people, was yet absolutely unable to accomplish the only thing that God wanted and that God must have from his people. The law could not save him. That was his own experience as a Jew. I will stop just a moment to say that, as a matter of fact, Paul never drew on anybody else's experience. It wasn't what anybody else told him that he told the world; it was what he had found out for himself by his individual and personal tests and trials of the things which he proclaimed. It was so here. He knew what the law was, what it could do, what it could not do, because he had gone through the whole process of legal training and of legal endeavor. And yet, after all this, while he saw the failure and proclaimed the utter futility of any legal proceedings to secure the end in view, he gladly, with a sort of exaltation in spirit, declared himself still a Jew, a Hebrew of the Hebrews.

In his personal relations the case assumed another aspect. He was perfectly willing to remain in the closest fellowship with his brethren of the old faith. He never broke with them; they broke with him. He wanted to be identified with them, and the Lord appeared to him and told him he must get out of Jerusalem. He argued the case—argued it with his

Lord and Master. He told him: "They know what I have done. They are perfectly excusable. I was as bitter as any of them I persecuted this way to the death. I dragged women as well as men to prison. I have done the very things that they are doing now. Let me stay here and see if I cannot bring them to my point of view." "No; they will not hear thy testimony. Get thee out. I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles." To any other man among the Jews, perhaps, that would have been a sentence of doom. I doubt—while I do not depreciate any of them, but recognize the world's indebtedness to them—I doubt if there was one among the apostles save Paul himself who would have received with a quiet mind and with a steadfast faith an order of this kind: to get away from the chosen people and give life and labor to the Gentiles, quit the highest reigning order of God's aristocracy, and go down to the dogs; to go away from the pure atmosphere of Jehovah's presence and Jehovah's life, and mingle with the foul and corrupt multitude that thronged the courts of vice which they called the temples of their gods; to turn to such a life as this from the old loved Jewish associations. I say I doubt radically if any other man could have received a command of that sort and have readily and gladly given obedience to it. And you will note another thing about him—that he takes care, wherever he goes, first of all, to labor strenuously for the recovery of Judaism

from its blindness, and to bring the Jewish people to the recognition of the truth as it is in Jesus. He went to the synagogues and proclaimed the word of God first to the Jews; and it was only when he said to those at Antioch, "Ye count yourselves unworthy of eternal life," that he turned to the Gentiles.

Of course all this had its effect upon the mind and thought, as well as upon the outward life, of Paul. He could never shake off the influences that had controlled him in his earlier days, and, indeed, he did not wish to do so. They were factors in his work and in the whole course of his life. He could not have been the apostle to the Gentiles if he had not been in the first instance such a radical, whole-hearted Jew; for it was precisely those qualities which made the Jew prominent, and shut him off from the rest of the world, that were needed for the demonstration of the truth in the broader life of the Gentiles. This, of course, does not mean that he intended to incorporate Jewish methods of thought and of life into the Gentile system. Far from it. As far as that was concerned, he had been made free, and with a freedom which he fully appreciated and would not surrender at anybody's bidding. But, nevertheless, that intenseness of faith, that reverence for the old Scriptures, that regard for the ethical law, that single and sole recognition of Jehovah as the only living and true God that stamped the Jew-

ish character and made it what it was in the estimation of the world were the dominant features in his own character. It was a long time before the Gentile world could distinguish between the Jew and the Christian. They thought this was only another sect of Judaism, and that it would be swallowed up in the great mass of that faith. While, therefore, they persecuted one, they persecuted the other. But the Jewish element in Paul's life and in Paul's writings stands out distinctly, not as an incident, not as an unnecessary feature, but as essential to the prosecution of his work. The old Jewish arguments were the arguments by which men, after all, were to be brought to God. I do not mean the rabbinical arguments; I mean the arguments he got out of law and prophecy. He was pleading both to them continuously. The recorded speech, which was so much after the line of Stephen's speech before the Council, is simply a record of Jewish history and a declaration of the effect that ought to be realized from that whole course of providential dealing with Israel. Just as Peter, when he preached to Cornelius, did not take up the elements of Roman teachings and the Gentile philosophies and the arguments that might have availed with cultivated Gentiles; but he said, "The word which God sent to the children of Israel," and argued upon that and made that the basis of his appeal to his Roman of high grade. Paul did the same thing. It was a recognition, an inten-

tional recognition, of the fact that the law which God promulgated of old for his people Israel was still the law for the world, and that it could never be abrogated or set aside in favor of any other teaching.

Personally, as I say, the antagonism between Paul and the Jews became intense. There are some burning words by him about them in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians. You remember how, in comforting them for their tribulations, he tells them: "You suffer the same thing we suffer from those of our own nation, the Jews." "They have both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us, and they please not God, and are contrary to all men." His indictment is very sharp, and there is a tone about it that indicates that he felt very deeply the attitude of his people toward him; and he tried to defend himself when he was first arrested in Jerusalem by an appeal to the better element in their nature and to that special truth which was common to the Christian and the Pharisee party, the resurrection of the dead. But it did not bring them any closer together, and he was a marked man and a hunted man, as far as his own people were concerned, from then until he went to get his crown. Yet through all, as you read time and again through his writings, he preserves his affection for the people, his longing, his hope. There is nothing more remarkable than that, after all his experience, their



dealings with him and with the faith which he preached, he should yet cherish the belief that this people should become converts to Christ, and that Israel, by its acceptance of Christ, should be restored to its old place at the head of the nations and give to the world the highest instance and the purest and best example of Christian character. Those chapters in his Epistle to the Romans (nine to eleven) in which he vindicates Israel's original right and explains their failure to avail themselves of it are perhaps the most remarkable, under all the conditions, that were ever penned by any man. They stand there as the record of this man's intensely Jewish proclivities; of his affection for his people, his longing to see them partakers of the Christ which had come to him and his, and his confident expectation that they will ultimately be recovered. Only "blindness in part"—it is a moderate tone; there is a gentleness about it, a sort of an excuse, the way he speaks—"blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved."

So you have to reckon with Paul in his new life as still under the influence and as bearing the impress and stamp of the old Jewish faith and life. The shackles of Pharisaism he had shaken off, the evils of Sadduceeism he had never fallen in with; but the old prophetic life had been rooted in him, and the old legal aspects of the world were the aspects upon

which he looked at all times. The law had still validity for him. It was made for the ungodly and the profane and all classes of vicious men and evil-doers, he declared; and he held it to be, as to them, operative and effective to the last.

Now, with that tone and character, look at the other side of him. He comes into relation with forms of life with which he had been conversant in his youth, whose evil quality he knew to the very heart of it, and which he had repudiated and condemned in the strongest terms. The Gentile world lay under the power of the evil one. It was impossible that it should ever recover itself from that power. It was tainted and corrupted, rotting from its highest order of life down to its lowest. And yet he must come into relations with all this mass of putridity as close, binding, affectionate as he had ever felt or entered into with his own people. This is the remarkable thing about it. I do not think any other man could have done the work that he did under such conditions. You read his own account of the Gentile world. You have seen how he was met, wherever he went, by the idolaters of that world, and how they received his message. He made converts from among them. There was an element of despair in the life of the world at that time that made them ready to listen to almost any word of hope from any source, and multitudes of them were reached. But how this man could go among them

and identify himself with Gentile life, and show the interest and concern for the Gentile world that he had always felt for his own people, is one of the problems in psychology that can be explained only by the marvelous facts and truths of our Christian revelation.

He did not go to them, as I have said, until he had exhausted his efforts with his own people. "Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you." That was his word, and he held to it. But when the time came that his mission among the Jews became an impossibility, then he turned freely and gladly to the Gentile world.

One of the most remarkable things about it is that, as intense as had been his own Jewish life, so closely bound to all the forms of it, he never made any attempt to impose any Jewish burden upon the Gentile races. He did not care to alter their forms of life; he let them live as they had been wont to live, save only where the incongruities between their immoralities and the purity of Christ were made manifest. In his arguments with them and in his appeals to them he never brings in the old ground of legal obligation and requirement. He points out that these things are not compatible with their relation to Jesus Christ; and upon that ground, and that alone, he insists that they shall change their modes of life wherever they are vicious and immoral and impure. But otherwise he leaves them the

largest freedom. I think he went beyond what would be allowed in our more legal forms of Christian life in this age. He did not bother himself with small things; he did not try to put restraint upon them where nature—sinless nature, harmless nature—had given them liberty. He let them go their own way—did not seek to effect either a political or a social revolution. I have no doubt that he had in view the time when, through the normal working of the gospel of Christ, all these forms of life should be changed radically. I have no doubt that he expected the kingdom of God to be established to such an extent and in such form in the world as would bring about perfect harmony between God's thought and God's plan for, and the actual ordering of, human life in the government, in society, in business, in the home, and in the individual life. There are plenty of intimations of that in his writings; but his was a sound mind, and he did not expect to do great things by leaps and bounds. He was not a revolutionist. The revolution would be accomplished, but it would take time and the orderly process of God's Spirit and the working of God's Word to accomplish it. What he was after, first of all, was to get the individual man converted, and so to strengthen him in the faith that the elements of vice which dominated the world about him should be powerless when they came to work upon him. It was an individual salvation that he preached first of

all, but it was an individual salvation that was to reach through individual agencies into all the circles of life. The Gentile world needed to be re-created. That was what he said in his letter to the Ephesians—you are his, God's workmanship, "created anew in Christ Jesus, unto good works which God has before ordained that you should walk in them." The good works are not simply religious works. He did not mean that. He meant that the whole of our work of life should become God's work when God touched it, and should minister to God's purpose; and he intended that all their professions, avocations, trades, and enterprises should come under the domination of Christ and be ordered by him for the working out of his great ends. Here you have his attitude before the Gentile world. He would stand before them and say, perhaps: "I am a Jew, Saul of Tarsus; I was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, and was expert above many mine equals in mine own age in all that pertained to the Jews' religion; I glory in my ancestry; I belong to God's aristocracy; I have a history behind me that I do not want wiped out, and I do not intend to sever my connection with it. But I come with the offer of all the benefit of all this, unrestricted, to you Gentiles. You have been living down in the mire; you are corrupt all through; you see it yourselves, and you feel it, and the light has gone out of your life, and the hope has died away; your very homes are foul;

you have discredited your sacred places; you have dishonored God, you have dishonored yourselves, and all the natural order has been reversed among you. Now I come to you and hold out before you this whole body of tradition and of prophecy and of law and of truth sent out to the world. I offer it all to you through this man Jesus Christ. It is yours as well as the Jew's." There is a strong expression in the Epistle to the Ephesians upon which I think sufficient stress has not been laid: "He . . . hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us [that is, between Jew and Gentile]; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man." Take the words in their inevitable significance. He means evidently that there shall be a blending of the Gentiles and the Jews so as to constitute a new type of humanity, that which we call to-day Christian. The Jew is not sufficient in himself. The law which has made him what he is and given him his prominence, great as it was, could not accomplish the thing which God wanted. What it could not do Christ came to do. And what Christ came to do is accomplished, not only for the Jew, but for the Gentile also; and the irrelevant and insufficient elements of the old Jewish life are to be cast away, and all that is best and truest in it is to be mingled with the freedom and the high thought and the bright light

of the Gentile world, Christ being over all and through all and in all, so making peace and so of the twain making the one new man. It was a wonderful conception, and he is the only one who speaks in that way. None of the other apostles talk about that kind of a blending of the Gentile and Jew. His great argument in his Epistle to the Romans goes to establish not only the right of the Gentiles to the gospel, but the right of the Gentile world to every blessing which the gospel might bring or produce. There was to be no mutilation of it to suit their lower grade of life. They were to have everything that any Jew could claim under it. "I come to you when I come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, and nothing less than that will I bring." And when he pours out this rich treasure that has been accumulated through the ages and that culminates in the gift of God's own Son, and says, "The whole of this belongs to you, the Gentile world equally with the Jew," he has reached the highest possible point of human anticipation and attainment. He has come to an expectation of life in its loftiest qualities, in its brightest conceptions, in its largest possibilities, that nobody else ever knew, and he has left that for us—for the Gentile world.

I do not think I am in error in my reading of Paul's life and his dealings with these people. I think that was his mind toward Jew and Gentile. He wanted to bring them so closely together and to

identify them so thoroughly that either should have all the other could have; the Jew should have the liberty which Christ gave to the Gentile, and the Gentile should have the glorious heritage that had descended to the Jew through the ages past. And so the new man should have and possess and realize in personal experience everything that God had ever given to man. I think that is one of the great meanings of that great Epistle to the Romans.

Let me say, just to conclude now, that there is a larger meaning to all that than we are apt to imagine. We have a great deal of talk about missions in our day, and are striving very earnestly to fulfill the missionary demand of our gospel. We are just getting some faint glimmerings of what it is intended that we shall do, but we have not got the Pauline conception of it yet. We have only come to the realization of about this much: These people are very ignorant; they are very gross and superstitious; they are idolaters; they are unclean in life; their social order is impossible and undesirable, and their governments are based upon false views of human character and human understanding. Everything of this sort must be overturned, and we must, through our Christian agencies and influences, bring them to a better view of things, to a life more in accordance with our own. Very good as far as it goes. When the missionary goes on the field, he gets hold of comparatively few of the great masses, gets them con-



verted, and they become centers of influence and power. And the work is spreading. But it is to be manifested in its consequences far more widely than men really imagine. The only new man is yet to come out of this, between us and between them. Somehow or other it has come to pass in the ages that the Jewish quality has transferred itself to large sections of that part of the world which calls itself Christendom. We think that we are the people, that we have inherited these things, and that nobody can come into full possession of what we have; that others may be fed with the crumbs that fall from our table, but that they can never have the full benefit, are not capable of having the full benefit, of the gospel which accrues to us. Paul would say that you are nothing better than a Pharisee in that view. These people in the outlying world are just as capable of getting the larger benefits—the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the gift of the law, and the promise, and the Christ—just as capable of the whole of them as you are. God never made a man that was not capable of them, and never will—the normal man. There may be idiots, imbeciles, insane, but God will take care of them; but the normal man is not to be found that is not capable of taking in the whole profit and benefit of our gospel and of so entering into the fellowship with the great body of Christ as that he and they, acting and

reacting upon each other, shall constitute, in a sense that we do not yet discern, a new man.

What shall be that type? It is going to obliterate a great many distinctions which we hold fast to now. It is going to wipe out, it may be, lines of demarcation between nations. It is going to bring into the common heritage of the Church elements and forces that will lift it higher, bring it nearer to God, and transform it more thoroughly into the image of Christ. The fullness of the Gentiles must come in before we can realize the whole benefit of our gospel. But Paul would have stood before any congregation in any land to-day and have said: "There is not a thing I have spoken of in these Epistles—Romans, Ephesians, Corinthians—not one of all the benefits and all the great gifts provided there that is not intended for you and for every Gentile anywhere on the face of the earth. I come to you with the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." Himself full of Christ, and having blended in his own personal experience the large and free life of the Gentile world with the integrity and steadfastness and intentness and devoutness of the old Jewish life; this man who had them both blended in himself and had been made into such an instance of God's workmanship as the world has not seen since; this man would have said: "Yours, yours on any shore, in any clime, and under any conditions of life—yours is the fullness of the blessing of the gospel."

## LECTURE IV.

It would not be inappropriate to preface the principal theme of the hour with a word or two in relation to Paul's conception of God. Laying stress, as he does, so decidedly upon the person, work, and relations of the Son of God, many have failed to discern the fact that he has given perhaps the clearest and most striking expression to the conception of God that the world has known. He was a Jew, of course, and had the Jewish view of God—the Jehovah, God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of providence and of his people, Israel's God.

At the advanced stage at which we take it now you will note that there is no reference whatever in his later career—that is, his writings—to God as the God of Israel, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Now he is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and he deals with him in that light and under that relation particularly.

But he is almost, on one side of his conception, what in this day would be called an agnostic. God is the invisible God, whom no man hath seen nor can see, dwelling in light that no man can approach unto, and holds in that sublime altitude a being which is beyond the comprehension of human minds. Nevertheless, he is not only the God transcendent

over all, but he is the God immanent, through all and in all; and he is in immediate relation to the inner life, and the outer life too, of everyone who believes in his Son. He is not a God afar off, but nigh at hand; and though we may not have any faculty by which we can discern him, he is only the more real to us because we take him by faith and see him through Jesus Christ. I cannot enlarge upon this, but the special view of the apostle is worthy of your consideration and your study. You cannot leave it out of account when you come to consider the person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

You have to take into consideration another thing dealing with his relation to and view of the Son of God. He does not take it from any earthly source; he had no teacher in this world. The vision from heaven was his first disclosure of the place and of the power of Jesus. And he refers to that not, as we should suppose, in writing to the Galatians particularly and to others also, in the same line of thought—as the sensuous manifestation, the great visible glory of his person—as in the accounts recorded in the book of Acts; but the permanent record in his Epistles is to the effect that it pleased God to reveal his Son in him. That side of it accorded better with Paul's mental habitude, as well as with his spiritual tendency, than the open declaration, visible manifestation. He did not go through the same course of training that the other apostles did. He did not

know Christ after the flesh, as they knew him, and he had not to be trained by the slow process which they underwent to the acceptance and confession of him as the Christ, the Son of the living God. When he heard his voice and saw that light, that was the end of the whole matter with him. He surrendered at once all his preconceptions. All his notions, as taken from what he had heard of the Son of Man, were at once dismissed, and he could henceforth regard him only as the Lord exalted to the throne of the majesty in the heavens. From that point of view he considers him evermore.

Yet you have the strange paradox, not to say contradiction, that when he comes to the preaching of Christ he lays especial emphasis on Christ crucified. That is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe. But even there you have to consider another element in the Pauline character. He does not seem disposed to look at anything from the fleshly, the earthly side. As he himself said: "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." And he takes his conception and view of all things, Christ included, from the spiritual and the eternal world. If he had been trained along with the others, taught, as they had been, by the speech and the manifold works of the Son of Man, he would probably have put his gospel in another shape. But "my gospel," as he so emphatically terms it, is to be divested of all the mere sensuous

elements before it can be made effective in his understanding of it. So you may put the full significance into his own statement, "Know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more," in that way.

Another thing you must consider: that all his understanding of Christ he credits to revelation, immediate and direct. He is the most independent man—self-centered, you may say—of whom we have any record. He does not acknowledge indebtedness to anybody, those who were apostles before him or to anybody else, for his knowledge of the Son of God or for the whole train of consequences following upon his apprehension and appreciation of him. When he has seen that light, he says: "I did not confer with flesh and blood." The natural disposition of the ordinary class of men would have been to go to the men who had been in fellowship with the Son of God, inquire about this thing, and learn the details of his life. Possibly when Paul did get with them he learned some of the facts of his incarnate life from them, but he never made any use of these facts. He himself says that he conferred not with flesh and blood, and did not go up to Jerusalem to those that were apostles before him, but went away into Arabia. He was there, according to all the chronological data that we can gather, about three years. And he charges everything that he gained in

the way of the knowledge of the Son of God directly to revelation. He did not receive it from men, neither through men, but by revelation of Jesus Christ. Those are his own terms. This seems to be the tone of his utterance from beginning to end.

It is significant, and at the same time a little singular from our point of view, that in all his Epistles there is not the slightest reference to any of Christ's great works except the resurrection. Miracles are left out of the account, so far as the development of Christian life is concerned. He wrought miracles himself, and he knew that the other apostles wrought them; but he lays no stress upon them as involved in the life of our Lord, and never refers to any work that our Lord had wrought while in the flesh save to the one great historic transaction that has more of the spiritual than of the natural in it—his resurrection from the dead.

So that he claims for his view of the Son of God something more than the authority of apostolic teaching. It stands out at least as the one feature in his utterance for which he is indebted only to the Son of God himself—he takes nothing at second hand there. He may be willing in other points to submit himself to their judgment and direction—matters that concern the mere ordering of life under this great leadership he may require at their hands—but when it comes to these essential verities, he is indebted to no man, and will be indebted to no man. He will ac-

knowledge nobody as his master or teacher there but the Lord himself, and from him he gets all that is requisite for the development as well as the initiation of Christian experience. Even as regards the lesson of the Lord's Supper, he received it by revelation, and gives the terms of it, the terms which we use to-day in our service, rather than any other. He does not take the line from other apostles who had practiced the observance before him. Accordingly, therefore, we have to look upon this as a special matter; and if he is right in his attitude, we have from him the one peculiarly defined revelation of the person and place of Jesus Christ, and his mind concerning Christ is one that has been formed and inspired directly from on high.

The opening of the Epistle to the Romans gives you in very brief form the ground of his whole conception. He was called to be an apostle and a herald of the gospel, and that gospel concerned Jesus Christ, who was the Son of David according to the flesh, and declared to be (I don't like that word "declared" there; it is not a proper rendering of the word that Paul used, and it does not express what I suppose was in his mind. We have no word that exactly expresses it, but I think the term "designate" would be better) or designated the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. These three elements, concurring, set him apart and declare him to be



marked off as not merely of fleshly descent—though it be royal, partaker of the Davidic stock, kingly—but, as all that is involved in the future of the world, according to Messianic prophecy. More than this, by these three terms he is set aside and uniquely declared to be the Son of God.

Power—well, you think at once, when you come to use that term, of all its various expressions in our natural and sensuous life. It is the term used for miracles, for the most part; and yet it could not have been used to designate miracles if it had not had something more, if there had not been something more in the miracle than a merely physical or natural operation in the effect. He gives his best and highest conception of power in that marvelous passage in the Epistle to the Ephesians where he prays that they may know “what is the exceeding greatness of his power [God’s power] to usward who believe, according to the energy of the might of his strength.” He exhausts the terms for force; uses everything that can give, in any way, expression to what is included in the dynamics of the Almighty, “according to the energy of the might of his strength, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead.” The whole power of the Godhead is involved in that matter of the resurrection. It is the supreme expression and, I might say, the final expression of God’s power. But it lies over in another sphere. It does not belong to this natural side.

The mere bringing of a man back from the tomb to the natural life was not a new thing, and there was no such superabundance and overflow of divine power in that as would satisfy the mind of Paul. He got rid of all the merely natural associations, plunged boldly out into the sphere of the unseen and eternal, and found in the movement of spiritual forces there the last, the exhaustive (if I dare say such a thing) expression of God's power.

It is for that reason that he associates it here, in this passage in Romans, with the resurrection from the dead. It is an act of divine power which compasses conditions that we have no conception of here. These conditions do not belong to mortal, natural life. They are things to be regarded as of inferior quality and of a lower order. But when you want to find the greatness of God, to discover the great qualities and powers of his nature, you have to get rid of everything that is sensuous and formal and merely natural, as we use that term, and get out into the broader regions of the spiritual world where God makes his home and where only he can completely exhibit himself. You find the last expression of divine power in the resurrection of this Jesus, and that not simply as the work of God, as an expression of what God can do and does, but, more than that, it is the inevitable result of the spirit of holiness that belongs essentially to him, makes him what he is, and indues him with the prerogative

of the right to life of which death could not deprive him. For it was impossible, in the mind of Peter, that he should be holden of death; and Paul echoes the statement, brings out these great features, and declares that they shut him off and mark him clearly to the world as the Son of God, immediately related to God, in virtue of his capability of such things and of his realization of such results in his personal life.

Now, if you pass on a little farther and look into the Epistle to the Colossians, for example, you find another form of expression equally impressive, perhaps more so, in some aspects of it, and farther-reaching: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, who is the image of the invisible God." Invisible, but with an image. It is not the term that is used in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "The express image of his person." That is our word—"character." This is the word which is much used in Russia and abused, the *εἰκών*, the image, presentation, and representation of an invisible God. It marks a new turn in human thought about God.

It was not new that God should be presented as invisible, unapproachable. The world had felt that and admitted it. The Gentile world, with the vague idea it had of a supreme being lying back of all false gods and fates and all that sort of thing, had that notion. He is the unknown God. But that the invisible God should project himself into a likeness and

image, and set that forth as showing himself to the universe—that was a new note conveyed. That was precisely what Paul intended to say: You cannot see God. He lies in the abyss of his own unfathomable nature, unsearchable by men or angels. You cannot approach him; the light is too dazzling, and blinds you as you come near. But here is his image, and it is a true image, and it is the only image of God, and it is the eternal image of God; for he was the First-Born, before the whole creation, so that he stands directly in the place of God, as far as all beneath is concerned, the whole order of being, all orders of being. He is thus at once put in his rightful place as the only Mediator between the invisible God and the searching inquiry of the inquisitive mind and heart of the world. You may go on from that, tracing every natural sequence; and when you come to think of all that is involved in this, he is the First-Born of the whole creation; for through him were all things made, visible and invisible, in heaven and earth. The whole power of creation is vested in him, and he becomes (I speak after the manner of men) at once responsible for the whole. It is the expression of his mind, as he is the image of the invisible God. He utters his own thought in all that he has made; and in him, and in him only, all things consist, hold together, constitute a system and a unity, and maintain their life—they have none apart from him. That is the place which Paul

gives him. It is unique, absolutely; a place that nobody in all the range of created being, no matter how high he may be, can hold. The Arian conception of Christ does not at all meet the demand. It falls within the range of creation, and hence it is impossible that it should take this place, speak of the whole, dominate it by the sheer force of its own nature and person, and in virtue of its own immediate relation, first to God and then, on the other side, to the creation, for which it is itself responsible. But he who is known to us as he was known to Paul, as the Son of God, in the sense in which no other being claimed to be, is Lord, and the only Lord, after all.

You have there, too, what will be accepted in the days to come as the philosophy, and the only possible philosophy, of the universe. You know how the philosophers have been searching around for what they call the "unity of nature." They have been trying to get some link of connection between a God whom they know not and this ghost material of the universe with which we have to deal. They have searched in every direction, explored the recesses of mind, and sought out the secrets of nature, and have discussed them and discoursed upon them with all the wisdom of this world. These manifold forms of philosophic thought are marvelous, and yet they have never reached a system of thought that would commend itself as satisfactory or sufficient

to any well-trained mind. I don't think Hegel was ever content with his own. He was always trying to improve it, and so of every one of the great leaders in thought. They never found a system that perfectly satisfied themselves. But take this in its whole course and you have got the links of connection, and the only possible ones. If there be such a God, if he is made known at all, he must be made known through some one who is partaker of himself and can come out into direct relation with all creation as the image of God, and the representative of God, and the expression of the power of God. There is nothing else possible to it. The Gnostics had the idea, but they got it mixed up with a vast range or series falling off as it descended, of beings, æons, and attempted to link up along their chain the gross material and the divine nature. They failed utterly, because they failed to perceive that there was but one link of connection, and that was to be found only in him who was God's fellow and man's Master and Lord and Creator. But when you take that, the whole thing simplifies itself. There is God over all, through all, and in all. He has manifested himself in the only possible form, the Son, the image of the invisible God. He has brought himself, through that Son, into open expression, so that by his works his eternal power and Godhead may be known. And he has so identified himself through the Son with the whole order of creation as that men may recog-

nize this as God's workmanship and avail themselves of it as furnishing the material and resources upon which human life and all other life is to be fed, and must be fed, until the end. When that system (I have only touched the first half of it; the other half concerns the sign of redemption) is finally worked out and men begin to understand it, then we may have a philosophy satisfactory to the mind of man—one that shall accord in all its parts and principles with what, after all, in its character and issues is the supreme philosophy of the universe, the gospel of the Son of God.

Now you have just these beginnings, as I may say, of the revelation of Jesus Christ. Paul had his thought of him laid back upon those foundations. He was not content to take what the apostles had used and go through that course of natural life, and by slow degrees and broadening vision get the final conception of the Son of God. When he got that one view, that ended the whole matter. It flashed across his mind with the completeness and the suddenness of a divine inspiration that this was the solution of any and every question. Thenceforth his business was to bring into logical relation (if I may use such a phrase; he uses it himself, though, so I suppose I may be justified in it) the risen Christ, the image of the invisible God, set off and marked as the Son of God, and the Christ crucified—the hardest problem that the human mind ever had to en-

counter. We have not settled it to our own satisfaction yet. It is hard for us when we look at the Christ, hear the groans and see the blood, and our hearts are torn by the expressed agony of that form. That is all human; it is of the earth. It does not belong to the spiritual side of things; and we marvel at it and glory in it, and many of us glory in it mainly because it is of our own sort. It belongs to our own natural order of life. But when Paul speaks of glorying in the cross, he does it in a very different tone: "By which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." He does not take it as the crucifixion of Christ simply, but as in his person the utter destruction of the forces of this world as they stand out against him. He is looking at it from that height. He was looking out at the Lord, I doubt not, just as John saw him in the first scene of the apocalyptic vision; just as he thinks of the cross and sees it to-day—not the humiliation, but the way of the final conflict and the supreme triumph, the treading down and overcoming of the forces of evil of all the world as they brought themselves to bear upon him in that last bloody struggle. It was not his defeat; the resurrection told that. It was their defeat. And it was their defeat because he was not only the Son of man, the highest representative of the race, but he was the Son of God.

I do not know whether it is possible for us, in our present state, to get at the whole truth—nay, I may



say it is not possible. Our faculties are too limited and our discernment of spiritual things is defective. We shall have to get rid of a good deal of the fleshly prejudice and disposition, the mind of the flesh (which we cannot completely conquer until we get rid of it), before we can get into the real spiritual significance of the person and life of Christ. But Paul, whether he had heard the words that were put on record by John long after Paul wrote, or whether he had heard them by tradition or through the other apostles, or whether he had learned them from his Lord, still got the significance of them, and put the whole meaning into his own understanding of truth and in his own expression of it: "The flesh profiteth nothing; it is the Spirit that giveth life." He held to that and lived that, and he interprets the cross, interprets the whole life of Christ, from that side. I think you may easily account for his silence as to the whole incarnate career of the Son of God upon that ground. I don't want to know him after the flesh. I have got a higher view of him. I have seen him, and I know what he is. He belongs to that sphere, and I am not going to belittle him or narrow him by putting him down within the range of our merely natural, historic, and incarnate movement and life.

But you will note still another thing about him. He does not, as we are accustomed to do, distinguish between the risen Christ and the Christ in the flesh. It is not with the life broken up into sections.

The Christ of the resurrection and the glory is the same as the Christ on the cross and the preëxisting Christ. It is a continuous life with him, through all its accidents and incidents. It does not change. He is the same in a broader sense than the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews meant it. He is the same yesterday and to-day and forever. Paul talks about him in that way: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor"—the same, just a continuous movement in that eternal life. And he accounts for the whole thing by that wonderful passage in the Epistle to the Philippians: "Who, being in the form of God, . . . emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, . . . becoming obedient even unto death. . . . Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, . . . and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." That links them all together. He that was in the form of God is exactly the same as he who emptied himself, was made in the likeness of men, took the form of a servant, humbled himself unto death, and is exalted again. It is almost in exact correspondence with that wonderful closing paragraph of our Lord's great prayer: "I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me, . . . that they may behold my glory, which I had with thee before the world was."

So the conception of Christ as the Son of God and as the expression of God, the image of the invisible God, carries with it that timelessness which dates him back. There never was a moment when he did not exist. In Paul's view of it, there never was a period in all the eternities when he was not as closely identified with God and with God's workmanship as he has been revealed to us to be in this last time. The mystery may have been hidden through the ages; but it was there, and has simply been disclosed to us in these times. So he brings that continuous life, eternal life of the Son of God, out of the mists and darkness of the past eternities, sets it out into the clear light, and says: "Now you have God's whole secret; there is nothing hidden." As the Master himself said: "All things that the Father hath are mine, and the Spirit shall take of mine and show it to you." I bring you the last result of the revelation in Jesus Christ. I want you to understand that you will never get any more than this. You are complete in him, for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge. Now, what can you make out of all that? I have given you specimens simply. You may search Paul through, and you will find that it is his distinctive characteristic that he preaches and treats of Christ. He does not dwell much, while what he does say is wonderfully expressive, on God the Fa-

ther; but every Epistle, almost every line of every Epistle, is stamped with the seal and name of the Son of God. I do not wonder that at Antioch, where he preached Christ, the term "Christian" first came into vogue. When he talks about his own relation to the Father and to the eternal life, it is in Christ all the time. Christ in you is your hope of glory. "We preach Christ, admonishing every man and teaching every man, in all wisdom," because it is all hid in him, "that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." The constant phrase of his Christian life and experience is "in Christ." The Christian life is a life that is characterized by that feature. It is identified with Christ by living. "Not I, but Christ liveth in me." "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Christ takes his place as First-Born of the whole creation, its rightful Lord. He is the Head of the body, the Head of the Church of the living God, and he is the Head over all things to the Church, and so he becomes actually supreme. You cannot put anybody else in his place, and you cannot take him out of his place without scattering the universe, dissipating it, destroying it. You cannot take him out of the place that he holds in the Church of God without reducing the Church to a mere club; henceforth it has no place among the religious forces of the world. It gets its character from this, that it is the Church of Jesus Christ; and for evermore it is not only to be known by that name,

but it is to express the mind and spirit of Christ. Paul will have no Church and will have no Christian life that is not rooted and grounded in it. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid"—that is, Christ Jesus. And he is at one with his Lord there. His Master said practically the same thing, so that Christ becomes literally, to the apostle, all in all. He would say to you: "I don't know God now except through Christ. When I want to search out God, I go to my Master and my Lord. He has manifested himself, and in manifesting himself has manifested the Father; and whoever wants to know the Father has only to comply with the requirement of the Lord: 'If any man keep my word, my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.' " He is as solicitous for the maintenance of that absolute union between the Father and the Son as the Master himself was. "He that is in me is in the Father." "Believe me, that I am in the Father and the Father in me." "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." It is all God, because it is all Christ. Christ and God are identified in such sort and so fully as that henceforth the world can never know God except in and through Christ. There is no use talking about deism or of any theism that does not come within the range of this gospel. There is no use to talk about any process of salvation that proceeds from any divine source

that leaves him out of the question. There is no use to talk of any providence that does not include the immediate relation of the Son of God to the Father and to the world as the Father's only representative. Christ is all and in all; and instead of being narrowed down by such a conception, shut within the limits, we simply open out more widely the possibilities of our own nature. We get nearer to God there than we can in any other way, and have larger views of God. You can go back as far as you please in the eternities. There is nothing in all the history of the Godhead, if I may use such a term about him, with which Christ is not connected and identified. You may take the whole course of human history. Wherever God has come, Christ has been. You may take the present attitude and prospect of our humanity. There lies no hope for the future unless it be grounded in and settled upon the Christ as the Son of the living God. When you put God up into the deistic atmosphere or reduce him to the theism of the world's old philosophies, you simply make it impossible that there should be any revelation of him to the inner life of man—his soul, his heart, his conscience—that there should be any direct and immediate control of him over the ordering of life; that there should be any hope for man in the outcome of his history, for man would then be left simply to his own notions of what God may be and to his own ordering of his life without God. It is only in Christ

that we begin to realize that God is not only God transcendent over all, but he is through all and in all. The incarnation is not dwelt upon with any special emphasis by Paul, simply because Christ is one in his view, whether he is incarnate, or before the incarnation or after. He does not make any distinction, but the incarnation was simply bringing God in Christ into more manifest relations to our life. Apart from that, there would have been no such conception of God in his personal relation to our humanity as now charges the whole thought and feeling of the Church of God. Apart from the incarnation, we should never have been able to bring ourselves into immediate contact with God. Now the whole being of the man, when he believes in Jesus Christ, thrills with the consciousness of God in him; and all the movement of his life, under the direction of his Master and Lord, is under the energy and impulse of the Godhead. The Spirit of God, representative of all the forces in the divine nature, the personal and immediate representative of Jesus Christ himself, the exponent of his life and work, comes and lives and dwells in us and moves us along the lines which the Master himself indicates for our life.

I do not know that it is worth while to go beyond this as indicating Paul's place and his mind in the Church in relation to what is the fundamental fact. This is the critical thing, as you may have seen from what I have said. In the whole Christian system

you may have everything else; but if the true conception and realization of Christ be left out, the rest is but rooted in sand, and you cannot hold it together, for there is no cohesive power in the terms of the system. If you leave Christ out, it is practically impossible that you should ever come into any personal fellowship with God. God remains remote and inaccessible. He is not henceforth the God that hears prayer. He is not the God that sympathizes with our humanity in its trouble and evil. He is not the God to reach out the helping hand to the weak. But if Christ be, as he is proclaimed by Paul to be, the center and source of all the life of the Godhead to us, then, indeed, we have got all the forces and resources of the Godhead enlisted in our behalf; not only charging themselves with our interests, but coming down to take part in our life and directing all our movements, so that they shall issue according to God's will and highest aim for us unto the largest life of which our nature is capable. We owe it all to Christ, and to Christ as Paul gives him to us.

It is worth while to call your attention to what you are perfectly familiar with, but which is germane to this matter. Paul wrote before any of the Gospels was written. His is the first record that we have of the place that Christ has in the Church and in the world. Matthew and Mark and Luke and John and James and Peter and Jude—all wrote after him. And I doubt not that somewhat of their view



(they agree substantially with him) was taken from him. The letters were circulated widely. They could hardly have failed to be read, some of them at least; and they make Paul's impression of Christ upon the Church and upon the world before any other of the great representatives of the gospel, of the true gospel, is heard or seen in the Churches. Paul, as Christ's immediate and first exponent to the world, gives us the nearest—and I do not hesitate to say the truest, as it is the broadest and loftiest—view of the Son of God in his relation to all the worlds and to all orders of being.

## LECTURE V.

I WILL read to you a section from the Epistle to the Colossians, to which I referred yesterday. At that time I gave you the first half of it, so that you might have some conception of what was in Paul's mind in regard to Jesus Christ, the First-Born of the whole creation, through whom all things were created, visible and invisible; all the thrones, dominions, principalities, or powers—all things were created by him, through him, and unto him. That gives him his place and determines of necessity his character, for there is nothing artificial in God's dealings. If he holds that place, it is because it is essential and rightfully his; it belongs to him of his character.

Now, if you look at the other aspect of the case (I am afraid to trust my memory, so I will look into the New Testament), "He is the Head of the body, the Church"—somewhat shifting the ground, recognizing the existence of a chosen and called number to whom he is, in special and closer relations, Head. You know how Paul dwells upon that in various places in his Epistles and makes the very life and movement of the Church, the *ecclesia*, depend upon the Head; and he is this necessarily, because he is the Beginning, the First-Born from the dead. It was a startling change, and I think it was

a sort of shock of that kind that moved the mind of Paul and influenced him in almost all that he wrote in regard to Christ. You must remember that he began where the other apostles left off. His first vision of the Son of God was as he is in glory. He didn't see him in his humiliation and in the midst of the torture of the cross. His first view of him was as the exalted Christ; and as I said before, it must have required an immense effort even of that great intellect of his. I am not speaking on the purely spiritual thing now, but as an intellectual thing it must have required an immense effort of his to reconcile these two sides of the revelation of the Son of God. He could not hesitate a moment as to the glorified Christ, and he had to find how it was that the Christ on the cross also was, as John said, glorified. Christ is the Beginning, the First-Born from the dead; and out of that resurrection from the dead comes to Paul the disclosure of the meaning of the whole transaction, because it seemed good that all fullness should dwell in him. Nothing that pertained to human history and human experience was to be foreign to it. As it all had its origin in him and took its shape and direction from him, so it must find its fulfillment in his personal life and experience. All fullness—all fulfillment, if you choose—must dwell in him.

And then comes the crucial statement, the central point, I am tempted to say, of his entire course and

career through the eternities; the only point upon which his eternal life, with all its qualities and dispositions and divine powers, converges, and from which dated, I dare say, speaking after the manner of men, the eternal history yet to come. Having settled the disorder and quieted the discord and brought back old harmony, he made peace through the blood of his cross. That is the marvelous statement—that through him all things, whether things upon earth, or things in the heavens, in so far as they were disordered by the fact of earth's disorder, were reconciled. Disturb one planet in the whole vast range of creation, and all are thrown out of order. You come down to the personal application of it: "You that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind, by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unreprouvable in his sight: if ye continue in the faith."

That states the case on that side of it as far as Paul's conception and appreciation of Jesus Christ were concerned. It involves the whole question of redemption; it includes that thing which we call and which he has called elsewhere atonement. It runs out to absolute completeness the disclosure and revelation of the person and the work—not the work during his incarnate life simply, but the whole eternal work—of God's Son. We speak sometimes of what he did in the flesh and of his relation to us

as being a sort of accidental thing, arbitrary, perhaps, not essential to his person or to his place in the Godhead. That is not the conception that Paul entertained. After he had gotten his view of the Son of Man, he assigns him his place and designates the movement of his eternal life as a necessity, the essential thing with him. What made it a necessity we shall see by and by; but just now, if we want to get Paul's conception of our Lord, we shall have to divest ourselves of all the prejudices we have entertained in regard to schemes and plans and all that sort of thing. God does not make schemes and draw up plans; but he *is*, and whatever comes from him comes by virtue of the necessary working of his divine nature. His Son is the inevitable expression of himself; and into all of the possible circumstances and conditions of creation the Son, by the necessity of his person and his relation to the Father, flings himself. If he is to keep creation at all related to the Father, he must do it. So when I begin to think of him as the Redeemer, the Atoner, the Atonement, I, for my part, have thrown off absolutely every notion of an artificial arrangement and legal fiction. We interpret Paul's terms as though they were technical, as we are accustomed to use those terms. Paul was not limited in that way, but he used a variety of terms and used them all correctly in their relations, and I suppose he used them because there were none others to be found that would give expression to his thought and

meaning. But he never had any idea of being bound down by the technical language of mere artificial thought and plans. Courts of justice are not the precedents by which God works, and human judgments are not the basis of divine determination. "His thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are his ways our ways." Absolutely inalienable and eternal relations constitute the only ground upon which God presents himself to us and upon which he works in relation to us, and we have to take him as he is. You cannot tie him up with your fictions and your schemes. So when we come to think of Christ as the Redeemer, we begin just where Paul does, in the fact that he stands in such relation to the universe, to men, and to the Church as made his interposition, if there was to be any interposition at all, the necessity of the case. There was none other that could take his place. His place was absolutely unique. God could not (with all reverence I say it) have created a being to bear the same relations to himself and assume the same responsibilities as Head of the whole creation. It must come out of the natural relationship of the Father and the Son. He is the image of the invisible God, and as such and by virtue of that he reveals himself in all the transactions of creation and the processes of providence. He intervenes as being (I hesitate to use the word, and yet there is none other that can express it) responsible for that universe, and he takes the responsibility upon him-

self as nobody else can. We sometimes talk about the vicarious effort. It is vicarious in one view ; but that does not exhaust the thing, and it is only a small part of it. Why was the vicarious effort ? For the simple reason that he only could offer himself for and in the place of his own workmanship. Nobody else could take that office upon himself. Nobody else could discharge that function in the divine kingdom. Christ alone—because all things consist in him, and he is responsible for their being and the order in which they stand—could take it upon himself to restore the order and get rid of the disturbances. The whole question resolves itself into a matter whose full significance we can never understand until we see it in the light of the throne. Our eyes must be opened in a clearer atmosphere, and we must have visions of the Son of Man such as we have never had. We must, as John says, see him as he is before we can fully understand all that is involved in this work of his and in the relations which he sustains to God and man, out of which, naturally and necessarily, flows this work of redemption.

There are many theories of the atonement, and yet I may say that there is no theory of atonement in Paul's writings. What he wrote was simply the inevitable result of his own experience, and it was like the man. He was not content to take anybody else's thought and use it. He had not searched heathen records and law courts and books of philos-

ophy to find out these things; but he had been face to face with his Lord, and the impression produced upon him by that revelation brought out this his thought and his experience of what the atonement meant and how it was to be applied. So you will have to look at it in that way. The background, as a matter of course—because the word itself implies it, and the disturbance that is here noted and the alienation that is expressed find their meaning in that—of the whole business is sin. If there had been no sin, undoubtedly the relation would have continued. He still would have been the First-Born of the whole creation and the Head of the Church, because the Church would then have been composed of all whom he made. There would have been no alteration in that; but for the rest there would have been no need of death, for death would have had no place there. There would have been no need of a resurrection from the dead, because where there was no death there could be no resurrection. But sin (no use to stop to inquire how it came. The fact was what Paul dealt with. He did not indulge in speculation as to its origin; he stops with what was the patent fact in the case) entered into the world by man, and it entered through the transgression of the first man. What lay back of that he didn't trouble himself to inquire, but stops within the range of the historic record. Sin by man entered into the world, and death by sin. Sin with him was not a philo-



sophical idea, not a matter of evolution. It does not come out of conditions and necessities of our finite nature. There is no reason in heaven or on earth why a finite nature should sin because it is finite. It may fulfill all its purposes, as God proposed, even though it does not measure up to the God-head. There are none of these things to account for it. It is simply the bald, bare fact that sin, the worst thing in the universe, has laid its hand upon the race as a whole and upon every individual of the race, and has left its stain upon the understanding and upon the conscience, and has twisted and perverted the whole course of life, individual, social, racial, and national, and brought into degeneration and contempt all which God pronounced good. Under the domination of sin the evils have multiplied day after day, year after year, and age after age, until we can fling upon the canvas of our thought the darkest picture that ever was drawn, as outlined by this man in the Epistle to the Romans, without one line of relief to the whole. It is the blackest, worst thing conceivable. It is worse than hell, for it created hell. That is the thing that is in Paul's mind. He never makes any apology for it, for it is absolutely without excuse. He says of men: "They might have known God, his eternal power and God-head at least; but they became vain in their imagination, and their foolish hearts were darkened so that they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into

the likeness of corruptible man, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." He says that they were without excuse; they might have known, if they didn't know; they had the knowledge in reach and the faculty of, or the attainment of, knowledge. They would not know, and therefore God gave them over to their own lust. They did not like to retain God in their knowledge, therefore he gave them over to passions of desire and shame. The awful picture is put down in the blackest colors that man could mix, and the world is made to see in that representation just what it is in the light of God's righteousness. That is the one thing we have to keep always in mind.

May I stop for a moment and indulge in a practical observation? In these last days, with our easy-going Christianity, we have lost sight of sin and are dealing with men as though they were not sinners and treating them as though, without repentance and without the redemption and efficacy of the cross of Christ, they were entitled to all the benefits of the kingdom of God. But sin is there. Men may cover it and hide it, but they are alienated from God because of the ignorance that is in them, the blindness of their hearts. The trouble with the world to-day is that it has no sense of sin. It will test itself by any law but God's own. It will try itself by any line but the plumb line of divine righteousness. But, after all, when it

comes to the final settlement and decision, it is God's law and God's righteousness and God's person revealed in Jesus Christ that alone shall form the standard of judgment. And men will be tested by that. They may take the conventionalisms of business, the laws of social life, the opinions of the public, the legal decisions of the courts, the determinations of the legislatures, and everything they please, and say: "Before all these I stand guiltless." That is not the question. That does not constitute the matter of sin. What is your relation to the infinitely righteous and holy God? You have to answer him, and sin is against God. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." Young gentlemen, if ever you go out to preach this gospel of ours, don't let men deceive themselves at that vital point. For Christ's sake, if you want to save them, make them see and know what their immediate relation to God is. You have to come to that view of it which was in the mind of the apostle. And upon that he proceeds to tell what the facts are. In the Epistle to the Romans he has made the longest statement about it that we have on record. He dealt with it more at large there than anywhere else. The Jew had been claiming exemption from the penalty of sin, even though he acknowledged that he had committed sin, according to Paul's view of it, and Paul referred him to his own law. First of all, by the law you will get knowledge of sin. You have tried

to keep the law ; you did not do it and, what is more, you cannot do it. It is not simply that you are indisposed to do it. He gives another view of the case, another that is the most awful record of a soul's experience. It is written in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, where he places himself face to face, with all frankness, with God's law, and says: "I have done my best to keep it ; but I have not done so, was not able to do so. It reached farther than I thought. The more I endeavored to comply with its requirements, the less able I found myself to do it. I have done my best, and I could not do it ; and I know you cannot do it, for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified before God. You who were pleading your own righteousness, miserable thing as it is, broken and stunned by shams and evil relations, corrupt undertakings, pleading your own righteousness in his presence, know this: the righteousness of the law, even as that is given in literal terms, cannot be fulfilled as God would have it by any man on the face of the earth. It is out of the question." He tells us sin has got that grip in you. You have lost your hold upon God, and, left to yourself, you are helpless and hopeless. You cannot devise any law that has any semblance of righteousness and uprightness about it to which you can conform. If a law could have been given that would have given life, righteousness would have been by the law. He emphatically says that

God would have used that. He would not have given this awful sacrifice when it was unnecessary.

But the legal aspect must be thrown out of the question. There stands over against it, all the time, this fearful fact of sin, rendering men perfectly and absolutely powerless, and leaving them hopeless in the presence of God for all eternity. So he says in the third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans: "What things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law." He has just written a long, strong indictment against the Jew—not the Gentile only—that he has culled from various parts of their Old Testament scriptures, sacred to them as the very word of God, however little we may esteem it. And he has written it out in large terms. Your law says this: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith [not to outsiders, but] to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." There he leaves them standing, and men have got to come to the realization of that before they can have any notion of what redemption means. There is no use to speak peace where there is no peace. It is not worth while to salve over the heart and say: "It is not fatal. You will get over it by and by." It is not worth while to make the way easy and tell men that they can glide along smoothly, according to the course of this world, and by and by they will find themselves,

without special effort or struggle or pain, landed in the kingdom of God. The whole world is guilty before God, and he is not going to revoke his pronouncement of guilt until the redemptive power and processes have intervened between man and God. So he proceeds: "Now apart from the law [without any regard to it whatever; leave it out of the question; it has done its work; it was left you in this helpless and hopeless condition; you cannot do anything with it; throw it off; get rid of it—without law] a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe"—all of them. Sin shall not stand in the way when it comes to that end. This fact puts man in a new relation to God. The essential and fundamental fact of sin is that it makes God a liar. Man denies God's claim, denies God's righteousness, and puts him in a false attitude. But now, when a man comes back and says, "I believe God, that it is as he says, it shall be as he has said," he comes into an attitude in which it is possible for God to teach him through faith in Jesus Christ. The object of that faith you will consider by and by and see how it is adjusted to the peculiar need and condition of man. "Through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe." There is no difference between men in this regard, for all have sinned and have come short of the glory of God. And if they are

justified, they must be "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." That is, sins for which the law could make no provision, for which men could have found no remission under the law. The trouble was, the law could make provision only for what we would account mere surface offenses not having the nature of sin in them. They were minor offenses of the mere ritual order. But there was no provision for the remission of the sin of a man who murdered his neighbor or committed adultery or stole. There was no provision for the remission of any sin against the decalogue. If a man blasphemed God, he was to be put to death. David could not have gone to the priest and said: "I have sinned against God. Offer sacrifices for me." The priest would have said: "No; there is no sacrifice provided for your sin. The death penalty has been pronounced against you. I cannot help you." It was a prophet that said: "The Lord hath forgiven thy sin." And it was just as Paul said. God's righteousness was shown in the remission of sins, through the forbearance of God. That is not all. It is for the demonstration of his righteousness in this present time that he might be now just or righteous and the justifier of him that

now believeth in Jesus. There you have Paul's whole statement on the atonement.

You see at the first glance that the four great terms of our gospel are in the statement. There is first the generic term "redemption," that covers the whole thing and all the processes. Then there are two antagonistic terms, "the righteousness of God" and "the remission of sin," things that can never be brought together by any human device, and that can be reconciled only by some process that must find its beginning in the mind and heart of God. Then there is the divine provision, the reconciling element and term of "propitiation;" and there you have the whole. The underlying, cementing, and binding feature of the whole is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ died, and the blood of Jesus Christ, through faith in his blood, constitutes the main element of propitiation.

I need not say that I have no sort of sympathy with the theology of our times, for that tries to wipe the blood out of the new covenant and leave us without that divine provision for our access to God. Men get very sentimental and very humane when it comes to dealing with God's affairs; but they have not, however, the same kind of forbearance when it comes to human affairs. They will let men kill each other and die for each other, and sometimes commend them for it. But if God comes in and says, "There is only one way to save a man. The wages of sin



is death, and the penalty must be paid. The man must have his wages. He must die, and the only way for him to die is by the death and in the death of Jesus Christ," they say it cannot be so. But there is nothing else; and if you blot the blood out, and take away the death, and tear down the cross, and wipe out all that record, that dreadful record of pain, agony, and shame, you leave us nothing upon which to build our hope. That is the last refuge of the sinner; and if the remission of sins is not found through the blood of Jesus Christ, it will be found nowhere in God's universe.

Well, what is the secret of this fact? I do not know that I need say any more about that than Paul said. He said some other things—many things are said—and you have to include them all under this generic term "redemption" before you can get a full conception of this process that was in his mind. He omitted nothing that touched at any point his own experience, and beyond that he would not go. No matter what others said, he had nothing to do with that. "I have talked with Christ; I have seen him; I have felt the touch of his hand; I know the virtue of his blood; I have stood by the cross; I have died with Christ, and live, not I, but Christ liveth in me. I know what it means to me. I have no theory for you to accept, and I accept no other man's theory. But here are the facts in the case. By the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

through faith in his blood, the sins of everyone that believeth in him are remitted, and he is entitled from thenceforth to all benefit that has been brought to the world by the person and the work and passion and resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. If I should propound any theory, it would be a theory of what you may call identification. When Christ died, I died. If one die for all, then I die." It was not his death alone. Look how he stands here, as this apostle in Colossians tells you. All things consist in him. You have not any life apart from him. What comes to pass when he dies? His death throws the pall over everything. Its deep darkness shadows the universe. The darkness that fell on the earth when the sun withdrew its light on that awful day was but a feeble type of the horror of great darkness that struck the heart of the world. But the fact was that when he went down to the grave he buried humanity with himself. Its only hope of recovery was in an acceptance of that death as its own, and then the resurrection with him.

I will read again from Colossians. To show you how closely Paul identifies the believer with Jesus Christ, take the second chapter: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. . . . For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are

complete in him, which is the Head of all principality and power." Not apart from him; you have not any life away from him. He is the "Head of all principality and power, . . . in whom [here is the point where you find Paul taking hold of Christ's individual life and claiming every transaction in that life as his own and that of the Church which believes in him] also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." That is where your circumcision comes in—circumcision of the heart and spirit—and not in the letter. "In whom also ye are . . . buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses." And then he goes on and sums it all up in one wonderful passage in the first four verses of the third chapter: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

He binds us up, to use an Old Testament expression, in the bundle of life with Jesus Christ, so that

whatever happened to him happens to us. We have no independent life. Paul has asserted that he has none. "I am crucified with Christ; I am dead. I have no life of my own. I am alive, it is true, but it is Christ within me; and even the life which I live in the flesh, this outward life of relation and labor, I live by the faith of [not by] the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

The point of view must not be overlooked—the motive, the meaning of it. There is a feeling, perfectly natural, in view of the effect of sin, that, somehow or other, God has been antagonistic to man, an enemy, and that he has to be drawn down somehow, by some sacrifice that shall appease him. Men talk that way (I have no doubt that they feel that way, because of the consciousness of sinfulness), but that is not the way Paul talks or our Scriptures anywhere talk. John writes, and it is written in the history of the Church so that the world may read it: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son." The prime motive of the whole thing was God's love. He didn't want the world to perish, and he has given every indication and proof of it. He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; and it is upon that ground that Paul so emphatically in the Epistle to the Ephesians insists upon the fact that we are saved by grace, that it is all of grace; that the thing did not originate with man. It could not have had its origin in human thought, in

human experience, in human history, but it had its origin in the mind of God. His longing for men, his desire, as the Psalmist expresses it, unto the work of his own hand, would not let him sit silent in the sufficiency of his own Godhead and leave the creatures whom he had made in his own image, with the possibility of becoming his sons, to perish, and perish forever. If they can be saved, he will save them. The Son consents to the sacrifice, and God spares not his own Son, but delivers him up to every stroke and pang, humiliation and torture, and shame and death—delivers him up for us all. You have to go back to this standing point: it is the most marvelous thing that ever entered into human thought; it is a thing not to be dealt with lightly or thought of as a matter of indifference. Do not let it become a matter of mere customary acceptance, a matter of creed. It is a shame even to repeat, as we do Sunday after Sunday, in cold, lifeless tones, the awful statement: "Who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried." No more terrible statement was ever sounded out in God's universe; and yet, as a matter of course, we repeat it with hearts untouched, our lips cold and untremulous. But that is the fact. We have the agony of a God as the basis of the whole transaction—his longing to save men. And to save them he pours out of the fullness of his own heart a perfect love, such as only he can show. It is exhibited in the agony of his Son, who is dearer to him than

his Godhead. He spares him not, and lets the world know by that sacrifice what his estimate of sin is and what is the cure for men who are the victims and subjects of sin. He comes with this tremendous provision out of the fullness of his grace, out of the fountains of his love. Here he has exhausted his resources, and now bids the world come and take all that it needs for salvation—only believe in him. If you look on that cross as Paul saw it, as the shadow of the throne, as the last revelation of that heart of God, as the last expression of absolute submission to divine will on the part of the Son of God; if you look on it as he felt it, as the only thing that the world needed in order to recover itself from the horror and domination of sin—if you look on it in that light, you have the theme for your ministry, you have the motive for your life, and you have got the cleansing power of it, the anticipation, the assurance of a heaven that will be all the broader because of the radiance that streams out from that tragedy of the ages and now appears as the Lamb as it had been slain, standing with the right of eternal life and rule, in the presence of the throne itself, and taking the book of life and of destiny and of dominion out of the hand of him that sits upon the throne.

## LECTURE VI.

MR. JAMES MARTINEAU, the most brilliant representative of Unitarianism in the last generation, speaks somewhat sneeringly of what he calls "documentary religion." His alternative is what I suppose we might call the intuitive faith. He admits no authority, refuses to submit himself to precedent or scripture—the man himself must discover and shape his own religion. The Roman Catholic view sets tradition alongside of the Scriptures as of equal, if not greater, authority; and it has been the policy of that Church for ages past to refuse the Scriptures to the common people, and to compel them to rely upon what the priesthood may tell them. Protestantism in our day, freer and larger than either intuition or tradition, accepts the authoritative utterance of the record we have, and makes it the final appeal in all matters of religious faith and practice. As a matter of course, we of this day and of the Methodist persuasion hold to the Protestant view. We have thrown off, it is true, some of the superstitions, I might call them, that attach to the old faith in the Scriptures, and treat them with a freer hand and view them in larger relations than formerly; but, nevertheless, they constitute for us to-day, as always through Protestant history, the final court of appeal when questions are to be decided that affect the life

and faith of the Church as well as of individual believers. It is well known to what tradition first led. It was valuable during the life of the first generation of Christians. They could tell from their own observations and immediate associations with the apostolic life, and with the life of the Lord himself, what the facts were and what the teachings were with a degree of certainty and clearness that left nothing to be desired. As a matter of fact, outside of the apostolic record which we have here, the Scriptures, and the Gospels particularly, are made up of traditional accounts. They are thoroughly trustworthy, because they came from men on the spot—witnesses of sense, men of honest minds—who had themselves been enlightened by the Holy Spirit and to whom the promise of the Spirit to bring all things to their remembrance and to show them the things of Christ had been fulfilled. But as the years passed and this old generation died away, it is perfectly well known how the tradition became polluted and corrupted. After two or three generations, the first tradition was absolutely lost or so utterly perverted that it gave entirely different meanings to the utterances of our Lord and of the apostles, and by and by they began to forge traditions. The Church of Rome to-day is built largely upon false traditions that were crystallized in support of theories that will not hold in the face of the freedom and power of our gospel.



It is true that the apostle uses the word "tradition" more than once in his writings; but he was in reach of the Lord's life, and the traditions to which he referred were all of a well-authenticated character. But the weight of authority with the apostles themselves attached, first of all, to the documentary record of the Old Testament. As the years passed on and Christianity loomed larger in the estimation of the people, the New Testament record attained, first, equal value with the Old, and then, at last, larger value; it became the final authority. At the last they came to combine the two and to regard the interpretation of the Old by the New as settling all the questions of difficulty that arose.

Now we have to note some things about the Pauline record, the apostolic record, to which he is the largest contributor, thirteen of the Epistles being assigned to him where there are four or five, or half a dozen, given to other apostolic writers. In his record there is noted, first of all, a characteristic blending of liberty for the individual with apostolic authority. He writes to the Corinthians, "Not that we would have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy;" while he writes to the Galatians: "If any man preach any other gospel than I preach, let him be accursed." He never had the slightest doubt as to the things he himself preached or wrote. He never hesitated in his utterance. It is clear, distinct, and final; and he knows perfectly well that it

is the only gospel for the world. At the same time he intends that that gospel shall not be binding because it has come by apostolic authority, but according to his own saying he made, by manifestation of the truth, his appeal to every man's conscience in the sight of God. In other words, "It is not worth while for me to give you upon my authority any truth or all truth. I know it to be true, and I am content to abide by it, live and die by it, and stand in judgment by it at the last; but you must know it as I do, or it is of no value to you." It is not to be a matter of inheritance or tradition or authority as far as you are concerned, except of that highest by which a man is bound when he feels that his conscience is held, that this truth should be accepted at your hands. So he blends the two, and undoubtedly, to my mind, that is the true point of view. He reasoned and argued with the people upon that basis. He never attempted to hold them by authority or any right he might have as leader or commander of the people. The only authority he recognized in the case as final was that of his Lord. His own, as an apostle, might be sufficient for the regulation of Church affairs, the direction of matters concerning the conduct of life; but even in these things he refers to the Church as the rightful director. When he came to the higher and more intimate concerns that were involved in the man's more intimate relation to God, he taught that the man must settle

them in his direct converse with God himself and by the process of his own conscience. It was not intuition that he magnified; it was revelation to the conscience. And he was simply carrying out our Lord's own teaching. He declared that his Church should be builded upon that; the foundation was laid by Peter. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee [not human authority—you might almost read it, 'not even mine'—made this revelation], but my Father which is in heaven;" and he added: "Upon this rock I will build my Church." And he made the permanence, perpetuity, eternal life of the Church to depend upon the actual acceptance of the divine revelation by the individual conscience and mind of the man. You see how it stands with our personal responsibility, a thing to which appeal is made perpetually; he will not allow one class to rule the other in matters of such sort. If Jew and Gentile come together, there must be a *modus vivendi* between them; but you must never let the Gentile liberty of conscience make naught of the Jewish restrictions, nor must you allow the Jew, with his narrow view of things, to judge the Gentile in his freedom. Every man to his own master standeth or falleth; and to this he holds the Church and every member of it and the world. This is a view that has hardly prevailed, and prevails only under certain limitations and restrictions even at this day. There are men, of course, outside of the requirements and

characters of the gospel, who plead for the largest liberty. They do it in the interest of license, not of liberty. But within the Church of God, the genuine Church of God, there is a tendency to lean upon authority, on the one side, and a disposition to exercise authority, on the other, which is anti-apostolic, interferes seriously with the personal accountability of the man, and threatens the truer, more genuine, and deeper spiritual life and Christian experience of the Church itself. Now you can read the apostolic record in the light of what I have said. At some points the authority is decisive and incisive. Paul does not hesitate, where a matter of sin is concerned, to use the whole weight of his authority to deliver the Church from its corruption and evil. He does not hesitate to give direction as to the right relations between men in the Church and between the Church and those who are its guides and leaders. He does not hesitate to point out what is the requisite for the maintenance of the true manner of life in the face of the Gentile world about them. In all these things he speaks in a tone of authority that is not to be disguised. And he does not want to disguise it; but when he comes to those deeper and more vital elements of Christian faith and Christian character, he puts the truth before them. But he tells them that it must make its own appeal to their conscience, and that they have to settle this the final question between themselves and their God. All this is summed

up in one brief, pregnant sentence: "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost."

I think that if we would read the apostolic Epistles with that thought in view, we should probably get a better understanding of many parts of them. There is a mechanical way, you know, of reading the Scriptures. We use them as we would use a text-book in arithmetic—this is the rule, and you cannot depart from it without falling into error that will upset all your calculations. But you cannot read the Scriptures that way. It is scripture that is given by men—freemen—who have themselves, by distinct processes of revelation, brought into the light a knowledge of God; and it is read by men who are themselves standing in the same attitude before God and in the same relation to him that these apostles themselves do. They don't allow any distinction to be made between them and other men because of their high functions and great offices. They are upon the same level with all Christian believers and with all men as they stand before God; and they do not intend that any plea shall be made in their behalf by men who do not occupy their position, upon the ground that they are not to be held to this high responsibility. They intend that all men shall stand upon precisely the same footing and be judged by the same law and meet the same tests. "Every one that heareth these words of mine, apostle or priest or layman or whoever he may be, and doeth

them is safe enough. Every one that heareth and doeth not is lost." The Master repeated this time and again, and Paul made use of it just as he would have done to his own conscience and upon the basis of his own experience.

Another thing you may note about his Epistles: for the most part they are what would be called occasional. They were not labored treatises and essays drawn up for the perpetual use of the Church, though they served that purpose. The apostle had in mind the concrete cases that were brought to his attention, and was addressing himself to the immediate need and immediate circumstances of the Church in question. Most of his letters—his larger letters—were addressed to Churches that he himself had founded, directly or indirectly, and the others to those who were personally identified with him or associated with him in his work. But when it comes to the reason for his communications, you will find it stated in almost every instance precisely and distinctly; and it is a matter of some contention that has arisen, some fault that has shown itself, some great truth that is in danger of being perverted and has to be asserted or vindicated, or some need of the Church that has to be supplied by a special provision. Taking them in the order in which they come (and, by the way, it is well worth while to look back to a book that is now perhaps old but very ingenious and instructive even if you do not accept

its main contention, Bernard's "Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament," in which he attempts to show that the present order of the Epistles as we have them is providentially given and serves better the purpose of the Church than if the chronological order had been followed), it is generally understood that the Epistles to the Thessalonians were written first. As we have them in our New Testament, the Epistle to the Romans stands first. It is perhaps an advantage in this regard at least, that it gives us the broadest view of the actual content and direction and issue of the Christian faith that is contained in any of the Epistles or, I might say, in all of them put together. So that, with this general outline and, in some points, detailed statement of the great essentials of our faith, we start upon our reading of all the apostolic records, and can refer back to it in connection with all the others. You take that first Epistle, for example. After its assertion of his own apostleship and what it means, it lays down as its main proposition that the gospel of Jesus Christ was given in its completeness and fullness to the Gentile world. The Jew would have said that he would give the gospel to the Gentile, but he cannot have it to the same extent and with the same fullness. "It is ours by divine covenant, and the Gentile can come only as an outer-court worshiper and take the crumbs as they fall from the table." Paul says: "No; they take it upon precisely the same terms that you do,

and with perfect equality with yourself." The first eight chapters are given to the demonstration of that proposition. It comes by a process that is open to all men, comes under the terms of a covenant that includes all men—the covenant with Abraham. The law came in as a restriction because of transgressions. The faith in the Christ who has come more than meets all the demands of the law, and makes it possible for the Gentile world to get as large benefit from God's revelation and God's covenant as the sons of Israel could, so that the apostle can with great emphasis affirm: "When I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ."

His next contention in the Epistle is that this is entirely compatible with the covenant to Israel. He reconciles his freedom of the gospel for the Gentiles with the old covenant, points out the essential features and characteristics of that, and refers it back to God's choice. He has the right to make any choice that he pleases. His sovereignty is involved, and Paul goes through that tremendous argument until it reaches into spheres of life and thought that no man can compass, and he is compelled to wind up with his great outbreak: "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Then come the particular directions that are necessary for the maintenance and illustration of the Christian life and the *modus vivendi* between Jew and Gentile, in



the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters, winding up with his recognition of his personal friends at Rome and his salutations to them. When you look into that Epistle in its detail, you have the largest body of divinity that ever was written. There are whole libraries included in almost every chapter, and there are a reach of thought and depth of personal experience and an outlook into eternal things not surpassed by any writing of any apostle or any man in any time. Yet when you come to look at the Epistle to the Ephesians, the tone of controversy there has passed away; the Pauline contention has been sustained; the Gentile Church looms up as the largest in God's plan, it promises to be world-wide, and it has the elements of permanency and perpetuity in it that the Jewish Church never had and could not have. So it is simply a statement; it is not a controversial statement at all, but it is a statement in distinct, emphatic terms, and as you read them they seem to be larger promises even than are used in the Epistle to the Romans. They are full; they are vast; they reach back into eternity. The apostle opens with his splendid benediction: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us [both Gentiles and Jews] with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated

us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself." So he goes on. He starts with God and goes back into the eternity of God, and tracks the movement of the divine purpose and divine thought until it lights upon man as man, not Jew, not Gentile, and as widely as humanity will allow. "He hath chosen us that we should be holy and without blame before him." The highest aims that the mind of God can conceive are cherished for humanity, and the highest relations possible to any creatures of God are determined for us—the adoption of sons unto himself by Jesus Christ. And Paul continues his elaboration of that thought in terms that make you feel as though the roof of the old Mamertine prison had been raised, and the floodgates from the eternal worlds had been opened, and the streams of life and blessing had flowed down until the very atmosphere about him was radiant with the light and glory of God in Jesus Christ. That has come to us as an apostolic record. Shall we leave that aside and trust to intuition or tradition?

If you come to the Epistle to the Corinthians, the first Epistle, the evident occasion of it was a matter that touched the apostle's heart and troubled him profoundly—a matter of schisms in the Church. We do not mind such small things as that. We can take them and not be bothered about them. Let men quarrel. They are saintly and good; it is all right; they belong to the Church. But they were

very serious things with Paul, and he spoke very plainly about them. He says they do not belong to the kingdom of God at all. "If you indulge in these things, you are walking simply as men—men of the world." The old Authorized Text and Version says you are "carnal;" the Revised Version has "men"—you are just men; that is all there is of you; you do not belong to the saintly order. It would be wise, I think, that in this last day we should pay some heed to apostolic direction in matters of that sort, and we should be saved a great many of the failures and calamities that destroy us and that hurt the Church and hinder its work. Until you get a Church united in its one principle and devotion to the Son of God, you will never have a Church fully equipped for the work God wants it to do. Every ebullition of anger, every outbreak of strife, every show of envy, every movement of ambition is a break into the unity, a destruction of the integrity of the Church itself, and as such is fatal to its full and complete success. Paul was fighting against that. These Corinthian people seemed to have a genius for that sort of thing. Well, for the most part they had felt all their lives the yoke, been under bondage, for the great part of the Church was made up of slaves; and when this touch of God was upon them and they felt the liberating power of this new life, it was a very natural experience that they should assert themselves. And when they began to assert themselves,

they would assert themselves against each other. They had not yet the elements of union, the bond of union, perfected in them, and the old antagonisms would take new forms. They would array themselves under different heads and leaders, and magnify men instead of God—Paul, Apollos, and Cephas—and even dare to make Christ a party leader and bring him into the partisanships of the Church. Paul resented that most keenly, as he resented his own association with any such feeling and practices; and so he protests against it with an energy and a vigor that have not lost their force as the years have gone by. There is nothing more emphatic than those first three or four chapters of First Corinthians—his protest against all undue glorification of men and alignment of men under different leaders for the magnifying of any one man or any one party. He winds that up practically with the marvelous word that shows how little, petty, and mean all their strifes and contentions are: “What do you mean by this sort of thing? You want men only. Why, all things are yours—Paul, Apollos, Cephas, the world, life, death, things present, things to come—all are yours. Why should you be bothering about these different ministers with their different gifts? The whole body of them belongs to you. Rake them in and take them and hold them as your right, but never strive after this fashion.”

Then the vices that had crept in, undoubtedly in

some part as a result of this freedom that the gospel had brought, allusions to which we find frankly here and there in the apostle's writings, demanded attention. They seemed to think they were free to do as they pleased, and were guilty of sins that ordinary decent men in the mere secular circles would not have descended to. With all the intenseness of the apostle he denounces them, and says: "Get rid of them at any cost; cut out this corrupt leaven." He emphasizes the unity of the body of Christ—brings out the true character of it. It would be well if in this day we could apprehend, as undoubtedly the apostle did, the force, the reality of this spiritual union. It is largely a vague imagining. We generally look upon it as nothing more than a symbol in the way of speech. I think one of our failures to get at the real power and meaning of the atonement is due to the fact that we have never yet been able to enter into that mystic conception which dominates the mind of the apostle Paul. Mere fleshly relationships are light things with him; but when it comes to spiritual ties, they are real. The Church is a body; it has one Head. The same life flows from that Head through all the members. Not a member has an independent life; each has his own function, discharges it according to the divine order and requirement and place in the body, but discharges it for the benefit of the whole. The whole, moreover, is concerned as to the way in

which this function is discharged. The lame, bruised, broken, or hurt member brings out the consciousness of hurt to the whole body. Paul emphasizes it, gives long paragraphs about it, and pleads with them for the recognition of this absolute unity of the Church as one body, because it has one Head and because it has been made to drink into one Spirit. It is not a matter of convenience, not a matter of companionship, fitness to enter into association with people like yourself; it is not a matter of literary culture and all that sort of thing. The social test and secular aims and social purposes of your common life do not enter in here. You have a higher relationship and truer union; you are bound together in one actual and spiritual life. How it reaches and how closely it binds men together only God can tell us. We feel the effect of it in part. When we shall know as we are known, then we shall understand that by our dullness and stupidity and blindness we have lost largely some of the best gifts of God. We talk about it and put it in our creed—"I believe in . . . the communion of saints"—and go out and commune with each other, just as men of the world do, without any saintliness about it, without any consciousness of higher relationship than pertains to our mere fleshly kinship and association. But Paul had something more than that in view. It was for that reason that he paid no attention to distinctions of class. If a man was

in Christ, there was the saintly bond; there was the spiritual tie, stronger and more enduring than any that earth could knit. He wanted the Church to recognize that fact and maintain its unity in the bond of peace.

Then there are just two things more in that First Epistle to the Corinthians that bear the apostolic stamp and reach into the highest latitudes of Christian experience and Christian life. You have that wonderful lyric, unsurpassed by any work of genius in any age, the loftiest song that was ever sung by Christian lips, in the thirteenth chapter, that wonderful lyric on love. When you have learned that, you have learned the whole secret of your gospel. But it takes a vast amount of spiritual understanding and revelation by the Spirit to get at the bottom and meaning of it. Then, with perhaps a further help, as the result of such a life as the thirteenth chapter indicates, the apostle brings out that wonderful argument on the resurrection. That settles the question for all time. No plea of science on its low, material ground, no question of skepticism, and no argument of the dread and fear of our humanity can ever weaken for an instant at any point the mighty force of that appeal, as well as argument, for the resurrection, which rests just on this: If Christ be not raised from the dead, then there is no resurrection, and our preaching is vain—that is, of no effect, powerless—and your faith is

vain, empty; empty of contents; you have nothing to believe. Your whole range of belief depends upon this fact, that Christ is risen from the dead. And if Christ be risen, he is only the first fruits. God does not intend that those that are in Christ shall be lost, blotted out of being; he is going to raise them up with Christ, as he has identified them with Christ in all the processes and trials and trainings of this life. The argument presses itself home upon the conscience and upon the heart. Take it and read it, just where we are wont to read some passages of it, by the side of the casket or at the open grave, where the house is empty and the light has gone out and joy has fled. Take it and read it then; and by and by you will find the darkness breaking, you will find joy returning, and there will be an exultant lift out of the inner conditions of mere earthly life. You will find yourself in the heavenly places with him with an assurance that cannot be broken, that when this "earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." What should we do without that apostolic record? What can the world find to make up for the loss of it? There it stands and will stand as the exultant outbreak of Christian faith and Christian experience until the last note of time shall be sounded: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is



the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Second Corinthians deals in part with, and I suppose was occasioned by, the cause of the man who had been expelled from the communion because of his vicious doings. This man had become repentant, and they did not know exactly what they should do with him—whether to restore him or, because of the grave nature of his offense, to keep him out of the Christian communion for all time. It is wonderful to note the gentleness and tenderness with which Paul deals with even such a case as that. "We should be very slow to act; we should want long probation; put him to the test; let him wait." "No," said Paul, "you may overburden the man. You will break his heart, and it will not do. You will bring too much sorrow upon him. Receive him, restore him." Isn't it a wonder that this rigid disciplinarian, who hated sin as he hated hell, would stand up in behalf of a man that had been so stained and polluted, and would, when this man broke down under the consciousness of his sin and applied for pardon, reach out his hand and, with apostolic authority, say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee; take him back into the Church?" He then goes on with various admonitions and warnings in the concluding part of the Epistle against the Judaism of the teachers who threatened to undo his work with their assertion of the legal claim upon the general body. He

is bitter against them. He goes through the whole gamut of emotion. He is now a man; he is not writing officially, but his heart is in it all; and now and then there is an expression that shows how the heat is kindled within him, and he makes clear that he is not going to take quietly things that ought to stir men, even men of this world.

But I shall call attention to only one of the great Epistles besides these I have named, the Epistle to the Colossians; and that is the one that is much alike, in its statements and wording, to the Epistle to the Ephesians, written with more distinctness and widely different, yet with much of precisely the same material. Its evident purpose is, as I have said before, to put Christ in his place in God's kingdom; it is a sort of an essay upon Christ. It is brilliant, it is profound, it is far-reaching. As a philosophy it includes all the possible sides and forms of human thinking; as a religion there is not an element in the religious life that is not touched by it; as a rule of life it throws you back into such close union and fellowship with the Master himself as that you have his experience and power of life for your direction. As against all the absurd claims of the heathen philosophies, the gnosticism that was creeping into the Church in these later days of apostolic history, it asserts the absolute sufficiency and unqualified fullness of our gospel to meet every possible demand of our human nature. You are

complete, filled out in him. You do not want anything else. Never mind your æons; never mind your philosophic speculations; never mind anything Jewish or heathen—your feast days and holy days and Sabbath days—brought in to supplement or to fill out what may seem to be very meager and insufficient in the gospel. If you have Christ, you have all—all that is possible to man or angel, all that is possible this side of the throne of God. There is nothing else for you; you are complete in him, for in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, so that you do not have to look anywhere else to find anything of God. It comes out in his person and in his work. All questions are settled by it, and by it you are prepared for the innermost secret of the divine life. "Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Not a man here and there, such as the old mysteries of heathenism selected, but every man—bring him unto Christ, and we will furnish him with all wisdom and set him perfect before God.

Finally, the Epistles to Timothy, to Titus, and to Philemon, upon which I cannot dwell. I want only to note one or two personal features. If I should characterize the apostle Paul in modern terms, in his personal aspect, I should say that he was the

most perfect Christian gentleman that this world has ever known. He was direct and forceful, emphatic in his speech; but there was no man who understood the courtesies of life more fully than he. There was no man that dealt with women with more tenderness and gentleness and courtesy than he. The elder women you must entreat as mothers, the younger women as sisters, in all purity, guarding them against any undue approach of familiarity or coarseness, holding them sacred. In his friendships (just see that list in the last chapter of the Epistle to the Romans) he has a word of recognition for almost every one of them. No matter what service he has rendered, Paul wants to be remembered to him for that service. Here is Phœbe, here are Aquila and Priscilla, and here are his kinsmen, whom he names; and there are Mary and Andronicus and Junia, Tryphena and Tryphosa, and all the others who, he says, have labored with him. He does not forget that they wrought side by side and faced the horrors of the persecution and still kept up their labors for Christ's sake. You know what that bond of labor is among men, among Christian men and Christian women and Christian ministers. He recognized his fellow laborers, some of them women, who had been partakers with him of his toil, and he gives them their meed of credit and praise, and sets the apostolic stamp upon them, and holds them up henceforth

to the world as immortal by virtue of service rendered to God's highest messengers, for the benefit and behoof of the Church in all the ages to come. You have, I think, the finest specimen of an address of a Christian gentleman to another gentleman in that Epistle to Philemon that has ever been penned. He approaches the whole topic he has in hand with the utmost delicacy, and yet with perfect clearness and freedom. He does not take advantage of his position in that respect, but says: "I have too much regard for you and your rights to hold back, even though I need him so badly—this man that belongs to you by every tie, earthly and heavenly. I send him to you. Receive him as myself; and if he owes you anything, if you have lost by him, just set it to my account, and I will pay it." The tone in which it is written! We talk about the Scriptures sometimes as though they came with thundering noise, crashing into the chambers of our consciences and consciousness. But they oftentimes come like the gentle zephyr; they fan you with pleasant breezes; they have notes of music that echo the mind of the Master. I think that was how Jesus dealt with men. If we could only *hear* him saying all the hard and harsh things that are on record as having fallen from his lips, and which he could not help saying, I think we should understand them better. There must have been a tear in his eye when he said: "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" There

must have been sorrow in his heart. It broke out. He stood over Jerusalem and wept. It had scoffed at him and driven him out and threatened him with death, and was soon to carry its threat into effect; and yet he stood there with streaming eyes and cried out: "O that thou hadst known, even thou, in this thy day, the things that belonged to thy peace!" Paul had his Master's mind in all that. He was tender, as gentle as a mother with her child. He tells the Thessalonians that he had dealt with them as a nurse with her children. We have the man set forth: there is the apostle; there is the genius of Christian thought and life; there is the mystic with his profound insight into spiritual and eternal things; and there is the great Christian statesman laying the foundation and framing the constitution of the Church for ages to come. They are all there. There is the disciplinarian with his intense hatred of sin and everything of that sort, and there is the man dealing with his children as a mother with her children, the brother dealing with his sister, the friend dealing with his friend. Everything that goes to make up the perfect manhood wrought in the image of his Lord you find sketched out, brought out in plain, unmistakable lines, in these Epistles. I do not really know any manual better worth carrying with you in all the departments of life than these Epistles of this man Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, the slave of Jesus Christ.

## LECTURE VII.

IN our biblical reading and studies we are very likely to pass condemnation without qualification upon that early class of Christians known to us as Jewish Christians—men who were adherents to the law, who thought it was a necessity that the law should be observed in order to obtain salvation. Faith in Christ did not with them supersede the requirements of the law. We think of them oftentimes simply as obstructionists, deal with them as antagonistic to the apostle, and give them no credit for what was undoubtedly at the bottom of the thought of the better part of them—a sincere and earnest desire to maintain the morality that was known to them through the law. As a matter of fact, you must remember through what the Jews passed. There had been but one guard against the corruptions and immoralities that deluged and destroyed the world, and that guard these men knew as the law. That had been the hedge about Israel, and they insisted that it should be observed. Paul said “No” emphatically (and it was a vital question, though they did not see it); the law must be set aside; “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;” there must be perfect freedom from that old yoke of bondage. The gospel in Jesus

Christ is sufficient, amply sufficient, to meet all the demands that God makes upon men, whereas the law has utterly failed to accomplish its purpose. The strife was continued for a long time, and brought out all the vigor and energy of the apostle's intellect as well as of his heart. You know in what terms he wrote in the Epistle to the Galatians, and how in the Epistle to the Romans he repels the intimation that grace is simply liberty to sin, and holds faith as the one security against the corruptions of the world. He held, as did the apostle John, that the victory that overcometh the world is our faith. That gives you a conception of ethics which is not common to the world. We are as much inclined to the old Judaic requirement of law as they were, and are perpetually trying to make men righteous by law, insisting that they must be brought under restraint and held down by precept and controlling power. Paul says: "No; you will never get men to be righteous in that way. If you want to reach the highest level of ethical life, you have to do it through the inner power of the spiritual life." And he shifts the whole question of ethical character and responsibility, just as his Master did, from the law to Christ himself. He elaborated what Jesus had said: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; the law itself could not have condemned them." In that marvelous seventh chapter of Romans Paul brings out the utter im-



potency of the law in the case of any man to secure the righteousness which the man's conscience tells him is a necessity in the sight of God, and without which he can never be at peace with himself. You remember how he closes that great statement with the expression of his utter wretchedness and hopelessness and cry for deliverance, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and then his one and sufficient answer: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Now, that is the best of Paul's ethics. They are not legal. Understand that. He insists upon that; he will not look upon the question as a legal one. The law gave the knowledge of sin in the first place; it stirred the conscience by its very contradictions and antagonisms, but it never made a man righteous. It is very true, and a thing to be remembered, too, that that old law started with the recognition of the one God ("I am the Lord thy God"), and based all its requirements upon their obligations to him. Jesus Christ set even that aside, saying: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin." He puts himself in the place of God at the head of all ethical requirement, and makes it obligatory just in the proportion in which the man is related to him. You do not find many ethical books written upon that basis, and you do not find ethical teaching very thoroughly given upon that ground. For the most part, we have the whole le-

gal argument. We plead authority of the law, necessity for a clean life, the obligation to do good to your neighbor, but we do not root it in Christ; and the starting point of all ethical life with the apostle Paul is Jesus Christ. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." And it is within the sphere of that new creation, and there alone, that you can find the ethical requirement of God met, satisfied. We have to look at it from that point of view if we look at it with Paul's eyes; and if you look through his writings (I do not want to read all these passages to you, though they are well worth your most careful study—passages in Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians particularly, and in Romans also); you will find that he throws men back for all these excellencies in human character and conduct immediately upon their relations to Jesus Christ. For example, take the broad conception in the sixth chapter of Romans, where this old Jewish idea was interposed as an objection to this doctrine of grace. Paul says: "Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" So he goes on to the point: "Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." The

argument proceeds upon that ground—the inner change wrought in the man in virtue of his death in and with Christ unto sin, and the use of all his members as instruments of righteousness unto holiness.

If you turn to the Epistle to the Galatians, you will find that he brings substantially the same appeal to the front. He tells them that they are not to walk after the flesh; the law could not avail them anything. They had utterly failed under the law; the Jews themselves had failed, and the only hope for them was an inner principle and power. It must begin within, and not come from without. As he had written to the Romans, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death;" and, "If you walk in the Spirit, you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." Here are the works of the flesh; they are manifest. And he enumerates them and gives them at length in all their hideousness, one by one, and declares that those who do those things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. There is as high a plane of uprightness and excellence to be found here as ever was dreamed of in the law; but it is the fruit of the Spirit, its natural outgrowth and outcome, not by mechanical processes fostered and cherished and shown in open life—the *fruit* of the Spirit, not *fruits*. It is a single, indivisible thing. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, kindness,

faith, meekness, temperance. Against such there is no law." But the law never provided for these things except in the way of an outward order, "You must be thus and must do thus," but never told them how. When you come to the new teaching of grace, you approach the question from the other side. The law does not come there; but Christ sets himself before you, puts himself in you and puts you in him, and you become conformed to his image, and then the whole thing comes out as a natural product. This matter has been an occasion of dispute with a good many, Luther particularly; for, you remember, he saw a radical contradiction, as he thought, between Paul and James. He did not like James's Epistle, because it did not lay stress enough upon faith. He counted it a mere Epistle of straw, setting it aside. But, after all, Paul and James were in absolute agreement. James puts you upon the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and tells you that the man that looks into the law and does not keep it is going to fail in his life and in his character. But what law? Not the old law. He could not have styled that the perfect law of liberty, for it was anything else; it was a law of bondage, a yoke put upon them. "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, . . . being not a forgetful *hearer*, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." Or, if you take it in the other way, he puts it as the royal law: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

That is his law, and obedience is required there as Christ required it and as Paul required it. But it is an obedience that springs from an inner source. It is not a hard effort of mere duty to comply with an outer requirement and a precept that is impossible to put as a restraint upon men, but it is the glad and free exhibition of the mind of the man toward his Lord and his longing to be like him and conformed to him in all things. Paul never reached a higher level, nor has man ever thought in loftier terms, than when he said, "Be ye imitators of God as dear children;" and that is a sort of thing that is simply impossible under any law that can be framed in human speech.

Now if you will consider the matter from that point of view you will see, first of all, that this is the ethical requirement for the Church of Jesus Christ. Paul says: "What have I to do to judge them that are without? What I do is to teach them that are within." It is the law of the kingdom of God. The main point that he insists upon, as you will find by looking into the Epistle to the Ephesians, and as I have indicated to you in some of my former statements, was the perfect unity, the oneness of conviction of thought and of life in the Church of God. He aims, first of all, at those departures from the spirit of Jesus Christ which tend to sunder the ties that bind believers together. I will read you a verse or two from the fourth chap-

ter of the Epistle to the Ephesians that is pertinent here: "That ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." The negation of the Gentile life is translated into positive renewal of the spiritual and intellectual life which is to be clothed upon with the new man shaped after the image of God. This secures the unity of the Church, and is the answer to the exhortation of the first three verses of the chapter: "I therefore . . . beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

His ethical system, you see, was a very comprehensive one. It was not that the man should simply regard himself, try to keep himself clean, think

right thoughts, and do right things without respect to what others might think and feel, but that he must bind himself by the ties and obligations that naturally grow out of his relation to the body of Christ, the Church. He must take the whole thing into account; he had no business to think of himself alone. At the very basis of it there was an exclusion of that which many theological writers have brought forward as of the very essence of sin, self-consciousness, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit, admitting nothing that would divide you from one another. You cannot be indifferent to one another; you cannot be antagonistic to one another; you cannot dream of any harm to another; you cannot indulge in malice, bitterness, or anything of that sort without sinning against God. It is worth much to know that you have a plan of ethical life here that is infinitely more delicate and infinitely higher, I dare say, than that which is expressed in the negative terms of the old law. It is not simply that you shall not do this evil thing, but you have to come into a very positive and very tender and gentle relation with everybody that stands on the same plane of life in Christ with yourself, keeping the unity of the Spirit by forbearance, gentleness, kindness, love. It rests there. It is not a question of personal right upon which men make their ethical systems, secular ethical systems, to rest. It is not a question sim-

ply of obligations growing out of the natural relations between us here. With the apostolic mind these things are just so many means of securing or illustrating the end that Christ himself has in view. First of all is the relation to him, the obligation to be conformed to his mind, to his life; and then the relation to all men as they are related to him. It is a broader echo and statement of that wonderful word of the Son of God: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. . . . Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." He sweeps out every consideration of selfishness and puts away from the possibilities of mind and life the petty resentments and low passions and the malice and envy that so often disturb Christian communities and even break up households. Writing to the Corinthians, Paul says of their wounding the weak consciences of the brethren by their indulgence in forbidden appetites, "So doing, you sin against Christ;" and that is the essence of the whole evil.

Of course when you come to what you might consider the more practical side of it, the consideration of the grosser offenses which we regard as immoral, they are put out of the question; he dismissed them with a brief, curt comment. If you have been stealing, don't steal; work that you may have something to give to others, and not simply



for your own advantage; do not indulge in lying; put away lying, and speak truth with your neighbor. And when you come to that emphatic, wonderful expression of Christian life that he gives in Colossians, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above," he follows it immediately with "mortify," put to death, your members which are upon the earth, all the passions and appetites that dishonor the Gentile world. You have nothing to do with them; you have come into Christ; your life is in him; you have risen with him; you have gone into another atmosphere; these things do not belong there, and cannot live there. John in his way put it in another form in his first Epistle, "He that is born of God sinneth not"—cannot sin, because his seed remaineth in him. He has the element of the new life in him, and it is impossible that these two should coalesce. They are incongruous and incompatible, and you cannot set them in the limit and range of the same life; and the man who indulges them willfully is sinning against Christ.

I said awhile ago that the ethical requirement of the Pauline system was infinitely more delicate and of a higher and more definite sort than any dreamed of under the law. You should put the New Testament alongside of the Old, and you can see the difference immediately. The Old Testament in its highest reach gives you very vigorous and very earnest denunciations of sins in their worst

forms, but it touches more on the outward aspect of them. Occasionally you find an anticipatory statement in the prophets. You find a word that looks ahead and lets you know that the time is coming when there will be deeper search into hearts than men have been accustomed to in accordance with the covenant by which the old law is to be done away. "I will put my law into their minds, and write it upon their hearts." But nowhere in the Old Testament do you find any such delicate shades of meaning given to ethical life as you will find in these wonderful statements of the apostle, and as you will find as the ages go on, expanding and coming into clearer expression in the life of those who have entered deeply into his mind and have studied most thoroughly his teachings. He does not stop with the mere immoralities of life or even its unmoralities, you might say; he does not satisfy himself with showing the incongruity of these with the character of Christ and the man's relation to Christ, but there is not a side or element of our human life that he does not take up and bring into direct relation to Jesus Christ and interpret in the life of Christ. Take the family life. He tells you what the man and his wife must be together, and in such tones and terms as never were heard even from the lips of the "Sweet Singer of Israel," with his lofty conception as he has expressed it in one or two of the Psalms; and that relationship has been since the

apostolic day tenderer and sweeter and a more exquisite thing than it ever was in human history before. It has a quality of morality higher and diviner, because it roots itself directly according to apostolic teaching in that relation of Christ to his Church, which constitutes the standard and type of all relationships so intimate and so dear as those that exist in the household and the family. You never found anything like that in the Old Testament teaching, clear and strong as it may be on all these points. When you come here, the thing is transfigured, the new creation has come out, the light has shone on it that never shone before. The Son of Man has come and set himself at the very heart and head of the household, and says: "You have to regulate everything that belongs to the household from this point of view; I am the Lord and Master here." It is in the light of this truth that we get back and interpret so much of the Lord's life as is recorded in the Gospels in his intercourse with men and households, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. The whole home idea comes out there, not because we know so much about those sisters and their brother, but we know this: that it was one of the favorite resting places of the Son of God, and his presence there made it such a household as God intended should be found here in earth. All that now is transfigured, broadened out. You may have nothing for the home but four bare walls

and the husband and the wife or, it may be, a child; but it has been hallowed by that word, and it has sanctity and purity about it that no other relation in earth has. Paul has put his ethical stamp on it. He has gone into the social life too; friendships between men become dearer and sweeter as they are touched by his pen. I referred you yesterday to that last chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. If you will look through it carefully, you will see how the work that they have done, the communion they have had with each other, the fellowship in suffering, and all these various things that constitute the ties that bind men together have been touched and elevated and purified by their common fellowship with their Lord, and made the bond and ground of friendships and of social relationships such as never was known on earth before. Thus it goes through the whole scale of social life. There is no side of it that has not been touched and hallowed by apostolic teaching and the gospel that comes with it. If you go into business, there is one thing he is not going to endure. You may go into business and be as busy as you please ("not slothful in business"), but you cannot carry covetousness into it. The man that is covetous he rebukes in Ephesians as an idolater. In the Epistle to the Galatians, as in Colossians, he also says covetousness is idolatry, and men of this sort cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven; there is no place there for them. In this way he gets at

the root of every business transaction. What is the spirit of it? What is the meaning of the transaction? Are you simply gratifying your own greed of gain, trying to get advantage of your neighbor in the trade, in the business deal? Is it only a matter to expand your own resources, so you can better command and control the markets? Is it this indomitable and unalterable sort of covetousness that controls you? If it is, you have no part or lot in this matter, and you may understand it at once. It is not worth while to put on the form of faith and call him "Lord, Lord!" It is not worth while to shape your life on the Lord's day for the decorous requirements of the day and the services in his house. None of these things count if that evil is there at the bottom of your transactions during the week; you have no part or lot in these things. The covetous man is an idolater, and that is one thing above all others that God hates and will not tolerate. It is the basis and ground of all sin, the root of all evil; and it is because men have become idolaters that he has delivered them over to their passions of dishonor and their lusts, to work out their own ruin. Paul goes right to the heart of your business. He has no objection to a man's growing rich if he can do it in honor and with regard for his relations to Christ in the method and spirit of his transactions. He has no objection to the zeal and diligence which men show in the active life of this world. But he objects

with no uncertain terms to that sort of business that is absolutely indifferent to the interest and concerns of others, and merely seeks to aggrandize itself and to make gain without any regard to what it may cost the helpless and the poor about them and the men, his neighbors, with whom he professes to be dealing honorably. Covetousness is idolatry, the filthiest and foulest thing that ever disgraced God's earth.

Go to childhood; he is taking the same attitude there that our Lord did. Jesus took them up in his arms and blessed them and said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven;" and Paul tells the parents: "You have these children as a sacred charge and trust, and you have to be careful in your dealings with them. Do not provoke them to wrath; do not deal hardly and harshly with them. They are God's household; they belong to the kingdom of heaven, and the sacred things of that kingdom are not to be dealt with after the blunt and hard and unfeeling ways of this mere secular life. You must get Christ's point of view and deal with them as he would deal with them." After this manner he goes through the entire range of life. There is nothing left untouched in it that is essential to the maintenance of human society, that is required for the onward movements of the highest civilization, so that it may culminate in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, we can put another meaning upon ethics.

We have our legal restrictions, and we say these things are necessary and we could not get along without them. Paul says this: "The law is good if a man use it lawfully, knowing that the law was made for those that do not know Christ, the ungodly and the profane. You cannot do anything with them except under the compulsion of the law and under the whip and spur of judgment. You have to deal with them after that way, but that is not to be brought into the kingdom of God. It is a shame for you to go to law with your brother, even though your cause be just. You go to law, and that before unbelievers? You had better be defrauded and suffer wrong. Why? Because there is a break at once in the continuity of the Church's life, the unity of the life. You have set yourself in antagonism to your brother, and that is worse than any loss you may suffer through or from him." See how he puts it, with no qualification at all. He speaks out directly, plainly, sharply, denouncing it as an offense against Christ and the Church of Christ. We have not any secular opinion of ethics like that, and we have not tried to cultivate any such fine conceptions of the high moral life as that. We have rather been disposed to take our view of things from the social life about us—what other men are doing. We think theirs is the model, and that we must conform to the ordinary requirements of the secular life if we want to live in the world of men. Paul says: "No; you

are living in the kingdom of God. You must not bring any of your disturbing elements into it. You are living as members of the body of Christ. You must not bring any of your corruptions or nervous disorders into it; leave the body sound in its integrity, unhurt by any of these passions and evil designs. You must not bring into the range of the Church's life [and that covers the whole life of every believer in Christ] any of the things that Christ has specifically declared to be against his will and which are yet common among men." Paul tells you that you have to get your standard of life, the power by which you live, the model of your life, not from anywhere in this world. He does once say, "Be ye imitators of me," or, "Imitate me as I imitate Christ," but no further. He says you cannot get your standard or model of life from any of these sources, but you must get it from on high, from Christ, from your relation to him. Everything is to be tested by its congruity or incongruity with his character and with that relation which you sustain in fellowship with him.

Now, the main point with me in all this is that it is wrought out, not as mere principles of training, but as the individual result of faith in Christ. He makes faith the ground of righteousness. It is not simply the ground of our justification that we get, but it is the ground of righteousness, which works, he says, and works by love; and love, he de-



clares, is the fulfilling of the law. When you have loved your neighbor you have met all the requirements of the law, because that is absolutely inconsistent with any of the things that may be hurtful to your neighbor. At the bottom of it is the faith which constitutes the leading feature of the gospel. That is why the gospel is open to all the world—because faith is possible to any man and every man everywhere, so that it becomes possible for all the world to get away from the law and the evil conditions of an immoral life, and come up to the purer air of the kingdom of God. By faith you can do it, but not otherwise. The ethical thus stands identified with the religious life, and you cannot separate them. The old Romish notion that held the religious apart from the secular life, and set an impassable barrier between the two, is at profound and eternal variance and contradiction with Christ's own word and with the Pauline teachings. "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck." You cannot hold on to your faith if you abandon the morals of your life. The ethical quality of the gospel is just as necessary to salvation as the religious side of it, and both come out of the same source—faith in God and faith in Jesus Christ our Lord. That is what I understand by Pauline ethics. They are essentially religious. They come to us with the stamp of Christ upon them, not the legal

stamp. They come to us as an expression of the freedom with which Christ has made us free. They are the natural and normal expressions of the spirit that Christ has put in us. They are the illustration and exhibition of the new creation which comes out when a man is in Christ Jesus, so that the whole life is bound up together. You cannot be a very religious man Sunday morning at church and go out the next day and cheat your neighbor or lie to him or show your covetousness in your transactions with him. Paul says that is absurd. If you are in Christ to-day, you will be in Christ to-morrow. If you are not in him to-morrow, you were not in him to-day; your faith is a sham. You are trying to live by works; you are putting on the outward form of godliness, but do not know the power of it and the necessities and demands that your faith shall bring these fruits and exhibit itself in that sort of life which is absolutely correspondent to the life of the Master himself and all its workings. As he put it in that sentence I read awhile ago: "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Whatever is not worthy of that vocation and does not correspond with it is to be set aside as unworthy of you and as a hindrance to your entrance into the kingdom of God; and if not forsaken and thrown aside, it is a forfeiture of your whole claim to religious character and to your place in Christ. We take the whole of our life henceforth from that center—

that one radiant point which shines into all the dark places of our experience and history, points us exactly the way that we should go, and at all times gives us assurance that the Lord is true to his promise: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." That assurance fixes your relation to God and your possession of all that God can impart to you.

## LECTURE VIII.

THE Epistle to the Colossians, first chapter, beginning at the ninth verse: "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding ["in all spiritual wisdom and understanding;" the word "spiritual" ought to come first]; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

This is one of those matchless prayers of the apostle Paul to which you can find no parallel in the literatures of earth, and the only one that will stand above them is that great intercessory prayer of our Lord in the Gospel of John. Condensed as they are, they comprise within themselves whole volumes, libraries of theology, and generations of Christian experience. It is simply impossible to exhaust them. Nor can we do more than touch the outline of the apostolic thought. It takes more of spiritual under-

standing to fathom the depths of apostolic experience than it does of intellect to sound the profoundest depths of genius in the world. And this is perhaps, in some aspects of it, the most comprehensive of all his prayers. There is perhaps a loftier reach of expression in that wonderful prayer for the Ephesians, "I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named," and so on; but the breadth and depth of this prayer for the Colossians are not surpassed even by that wonderful utterance, and in no other passage, even of Paul's writings, is there anything that will compare with it.

If you look at it in detail, first of all, and as having its bearing upon all the rest, there is the prayer for knowledge—"that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will." It is hardly necessary to say to an audience that has any acquaintance with the apostolic writings that Paul was the deadly foe of ignorance, and that the one great aim of all his writings and teachings was to instruct the people, to cause them to know. He had the conviction that it was possible for every believer in Jesus Christ to have knowledge of that, at least, which was best and highest—a conviction which, I am sorry to say, is not shared by a majority of the believers of the present day; the most of them are content to remain upon a very low level of knowledge. But the apostle was pressing the matter of their getting knowl-

edge on all occasions. No writer in the New Testament used the word "know" more frequently than he did, and he used it not as a synonym or as having possessed the same meaning as the term used in the schools of the world; for you will remember that he was rather scornful of the pretensions to knowledge that were put forth by the men who were the leaders of the world's thought in his time, and I suppose he would have had somewhat of the same scorn for the pretensions that are put forth in our day. What he meant was a knowledge that grew out of, first, a revelation, and then a discerning and broadening experience. He did not consider that a man knew anything until it had entered into his very nature, become a vital part of him.

Take, for example, that great passage in the Epistle to the Philippians where he declares his wish and purpose for himself: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." The knowledge of those things is not to be attained from the schools nor from the books. No man can lecture them into the understanding and appreciation of the multitude. They belong to a range of topics and to a form of life which can be entered into only by the way of personal experience. "That I may know him!" I know a man sometimes, but how do I know him? You can tell me all that you know about him, and if I have not

seen him and come into personal converse with him, I still know nothing about him; and if I ever really know him, I have to come into the intimacies of life with him and get some unforeseen revelations from him—disclosures from himself that he may never have intended to make. That is what Paul meant when he talked about knowing him. He is not to be known in any other way but by direct personal knowledge. You may read the Scriptures until the day of your death, and the veil is still over him; you may search all the critical writers, and they can give you every detail of that which is written about him, and you may still be as profoundly ignorant of him as when you commenced. To know him is to come into personal converse with him and enter into the experiences of his life, his death, his resurrection; then you will know something about him. It is in that way that Paul uses the term “to know,” and he does not use the term that is commonly used for what is called scientific knowledge. He has a stronger word, more intense, one that has greater fullness and meaning and greater accuracy, that you may know thoroughly—really know.

You will note, too, that when he talks about knowledge in this way he gives you at least an intimation of what is to be its content: “That ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will.” That is the broadest subject that ever a man undertook to know about—God’s will. He does not mean simply his will in

regard to your personal life just here and now, but, as is always the case with him, when he gets a man within the kingdom of God he relates him immediately to all its interests and to its farthest reach. He takes the whole scope of his activities and their issues, and expects the man somehow to come into harmonious relation with them all; and that can be only by knowing the will that is to give beginning, shape, and ending to it all. That is his will that covers this universe of ours, that goes beyond the reach of science and beyond the depths of philosophic research. There is nothing within the range of mere intellect that can fathom this vast abyss, the will of God. He who stood first among men and had the profoundest realization of what was possible to human nature and what God meant for our human nature said, with a distinctness and emphasis that are not to be misunderstood, and said it so that men might realize that it applied to them as well as to him, "My meat and drink is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work;" and, "These that do the will of God are my brethren and sisters"—they hold the relationships to me that earth cannot furnish. Paul had the largest understanding, I doubt not, of that will of God in all its breadth and in all its applications to the various conditions of life, here and hereafter, to be found among men. His thought and the energy of his life were concentrated upon it. To know—that was the



highest achievement for him, and it was the largest attainment possible for those for whom he wrote, and yet it was evidently a possible thing for them. They were common people like ourselves. They were not so well trained as we are. The slaves of Corinth and the half-barbarous classes of Asia Minor, to whom he ministered, were not people of high culture and great intellectual attainment; they were the commonest of the common people. And yet he takes it for granted that they are capable of reaching such heights and sounding such depths as these.

Talk to our people about these things. They will tell you that they are too high, and they set aside this book and all the teachings of Paul upon these things as fit only for a few exceptional cases, but not suitable for the masses of the people. I should like to know why Paul wrote in such terms to the common people then. He was not a man to waste his time and energy uselessly and fruitlessly, where he knew he could have no result. He understood perfectly well that when a man came within the touch of God he was made capable of realizing infinitely more than the schools could teach him or than he could learn from any of the experiences of secular life. To know the will of God, the highest knowledge of earth, is possible to every man that dares to believe absolutely in Jesus Christ. That is why he makes the prayer for them. His whole system of things, in all its details; our narrow life as believ-

ers in Jesus Christ and our low level of interests—all these things are included within the scope of the operation of God's will. And when we have the clew to it, we can follow it out and trace it to its issue. We know what he is, and therefore we know what his will must be, for we have a true understanding of him and the capacity to apprehend spiritual things. For, after all, Paul does not rest, as we do, upon the intellectual side and hold that a man knows these things because he can make the best intellectual use of them. The poets, many of them, without much spiritual discernment, have availed themselves largely of these tremendous facts and these vital features of our Scriptures; but I should not go to them to learn what Paul meant to teach. The philosophers have been sounding, throwing out their leads here and there along the course of the ages, and have given the results of their research; but I should not go to them to find out the will of God as Paul discloses it. You never found it there yet. Other busy men, with all the practical life of the world in their hands and before them, have thought that by the great plans that they formed and the great enterprises that they projected and the great expenditure and outlay of intellect and of labor in the wonderful schemes that have covered earth and seas they have met the demand and gone about as far as man can go in his reach and grasp of God's purpose and God's mind. I shall not go to them to

learn it; they are too narrow and too low. Not by any means.

There is a wonderful expression in that Epistle to the Ephesians that touches this line of things: "That now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God." I do not suppose they would concern themselves much with your business enterprises, and I think they would rather laugh at your philosophies and make sport of your scientific endeavors and their results, mere fragments and shards as they are of great truths. But unto these of the highest quality and with the clearest reaches of sight and insight, "unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places," is made known now "by the Church [not apart from it] the manifold wisdom of God." They never care to learn it anywhere else; they have concentrated their search and investigation upon this one field for the ages past. Paul says that is where they are getting their education for the ages to come, and he has that in view. "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" He does not mean that there is no wisdom for man. No; the princes of this world have not known God's secret, else they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But there is a channel of communication between us and God through which we receive the best and

deepest things of the divine nature. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard [all the channels of communication between men have utterly failed here], neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." So that nothing is left out of the scope of our research—nothing at all. God's will covers the whole, and the things that God reveals to us by the Spirit are the deepest things of all. Paul himself sometimes gets staggered when he comes face to face with amazing revelations of that sort. He winds up one wonderful section in his discussion of the great secrets of our gospel with that utterance: "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" And yet he dares to pray, he does not hesitate to pray, "that he may be filled with the knowledge of his will," after the true sort, "in all spiritual wisdom and understanding." It is not an intellectual process. If it depended upon that, one-half of this world, or three-fourths or nine-tenths of it, would never come to it; we are not equal to it. I should not dare to stand here with a mere intellectual equipment to expound these things of God. I want more than that. I want to be able to say that God hath revealed them to me by his Spirit. I am telling what I know. The things

which we have heard and seen we cannot but tell. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God has ordained strength and wisdom. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."

We often turn to the men who have adorned and honored the various departments of human effort, its literature and its science, and so on; and with some of us occasionally there is a regret expressed that such men are not expending their energies in the search after the truth of this gospel and in its proclamation. We think what a vast amount could be done if the intellect of a Shakespeare or the genius of a Descartes or any of the great thinkers of the world's history could only be concentrated upon this one great truth. God has rarely chosen men of that sort. But here was a man that had an exceptional work to do. It was his business to bring the whole range of divine truth, the mysteries of the Godhead and of the gospel, within reach of all the people, and he was about the only man of his time that could have done it. He declares emphatically, as he comes to the Corinthians: "I came to you . . . not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. . . . And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was

not with enticing words [persuasive words] of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." And it was upon that that he relied all the time. Likewise when he is praying for these people he falls back upon that feature of his own experience, "that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will, as I have been, in all spiritual wisdom and understanding," in the practical application of the diviner knowledge, in the adjustment of it and its correlation to all parts of the great body of which God is the center and head, and through which he distributes his own life, and in which he manifests his own wisdom—"that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will" after this sort. "Do not go over to the old Grecian philosophies; they have exhausted themselves, and the world is none the better for it. Hundreds of years have passed since Plato spoke and Socrates discussed and Aristotle searched, and yet the world lies just where it did in its despondency and in its filth, in its recklessness and its hopelessness. I want you to know something better than that." The one thing needful they did not know. They did not know the will of God, and they could not know it; it was not within their reach. "But you—you have just come out of heathenism; you have the lowliest position in the community; you have never been taught anything; no universities have opened their doors to you, and no schools have trained you in the search

for knowledge. But, nevertheless, you may be filled with the knowledge of his will, the grandest and highest knowledge ever attained in this world; and you may know it, not by the processes that are impossible to you, and which no school can help in using, but by the one way by which God makes known his mind and will to his creatures—by the way of revelation through spiritual wisdom and understanding.”

That is the first theme in this great prayer just loosely sketched off and outlined. You can dig into it as profoundly as you please, and you will find enough to occupy you for a good while to come; and if you care enough for God and his will to do it, you will find that it will repay you. But that is not simply for your own delectation and advantage. If that were all, if the prayer had stopped there, it would be a grand thing. Man would feel that he had been lifted to a very high plane, that he had been magnified greatly, that he had become larger than he ever dreamed of being, that he had gone into fellowship with higher powers, that he had entered into communion with God himself; but that is only one side and the poorest side of it. No man will have these things to himself alone. He has to be something more than a recipient and a receptacle of God's truth and God's wisdom. He must show the worth and power of that supernatural knowledge by an active, fruitful life. You see what he says

here: "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." There are two things to be considered: an active life of fruit-bearing, and consequent increase in the knowledge of God. I have been profoundly impressed by some of the expressions in the Gospels and in the Epistles. On this point our Lord said: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit is cast out, withered and burned." It seems to be the thing that God has no patience with, that he will not bear—fruitlessness. You know that profoundly impressive statement in the Epistle to the Hebrews on the same line: "The earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers [is not fruitful, but is simply wild and waste] is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." I do not know any more awful saying than that, and it declares just what God intends. He is giving this vast bestowment of knowledge to his people, with the elements and capabilities and forces that pertain to it, so that men may be fruitful unto every good work. There is nothing good to be done in this world but that it ought to be done and must be done, if done at all, by believers in Jesus Christ. You may talk about the advantages outside and all the agencies that are employed for the material bet-



terment of men. After all, I do not see that they have reached the root of the matter. If you should search into it, you will find that the evil lies deeper than the surface, and that when you have made men clean and given them good homes and saved them from the degradation of poverty, you have simply made them capable of doing vastly more evil than they ever could have done in the restricted conditions of life; and the most of them avail themselves of the power and the opportunity. That is not what God provided for. He wants every man so wrought up in the best and highest capacities and elements of his nature as that he shall bring forth fruit acceptable to God, "that ye might walk worthy of God unto all pleasing"—pleasing to him.

Well, you must have a good opinion of your fellow men; but it is not going to save you or save men. The thing that we want most of all in these days is the realization of the fact that the better part of man—not that which lies on the surface; not that which expresses itself in fine buildings, in art, in all the works of taste and genius—but the better part of man, the higher part of him, has to be cared for and is most shamefully neglected. Where we see men of decent ordering and living in an orderly way, we take it for granted that everything is all right with them. It will not do to take too much for granted. The devil can gloss over things and decorate them and hide the deformities and corrup-

tions of character and of life so that they are not to be discerned except by the all-searching eye; and we have to search out the needs of men at the bottom and provide for the betterment of the race in that respect, and then all the rest will come right of itself. You get a world of godly men, and you will have a world which God himself will decorate and make pure and clean and comfortable and happy; but until you have that you may exhaust your material resources, and the world is just about as bad as it was before or a little worse.

The worst instances—and often, unhappily, because they are unconscious instances—of the direct violation of God's will and frustration of God's plan are found among the men who have the largest control of this world's agencies and are doing what the world regards as its greatest work simply because not one of them will ever think of doing his work with reference to the will of God or of Jesus Christ. If you point them to the Master's own terrible saying, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me," they will not know what you mean. They have not the understanding. So Paul is not out of the way as an apostle for the Churches for all time when he makes prayer that they may have the highest and best knowledge of all (God's great will), and that it may be a fruitful and a practical knowledge, resulting in every good work and looking to their own

increase unto the knowledge of God, getting more and more of it.

There is another thing. Most of us learn our alphabet of religion in the Sunday school, get a few verses of the Bible, and after that we lay it coolly aside, behave ourselves decently, and think that is all we have to do. There are multitudes of members of our Churches who do not know any more about God, have never grown into the knowledge of God any more than the child in its mother's arms, if as much. "Of such," said the Master, "is the kingdom of heaven," and to babes these things are revealed. But these people do not care to know anything more than may serve, as they fondly hope, to save them from the damnation of hell and to secure them a decent and honorable place upon earth; and as for the rest, they will "jump the life to come." But Paul never was content with that sort of thing. He wants the Church (and he writes it not only to the Colossians, but to others in the Church) to be continually on the increase. To-day's life will not do for to-morrow, and what you have learned of God by yesterday's and to-day's experiences is not going to satisfy you if you are as eager in your Christian life as you ought to be. To-morrow there are new issues to be faced, larger revelations of God in the ordering of his providences; there are greater things to be done, and they are not to be done by the elementary forces of Christian life

that we command to-day. We are to get access to the forces and increase of the knowledge of God day after day, or the Church will stagnate, the world will sink lower, and men will die when they ought to live.

Those are things worth praying for. Paul never prayed for a little thing, and it is one of the characteristics of the man that he always reaches in his prayer as far as his expression can be carried. He uses superlatives all the time. You know how he closes that great prayer in the Ephesians. He has done his utmost in the way of thought and utterance; he has mentioned the fellowship and love of Christ, its breadth and length and depth and height; and he has called the saints to the comprehension and understanding of that. And when he has said it all, he finds that the whole expression is very meager and insufficient, and so he breaks out with that magnificent passage, "Unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly [the strongest terms he can use] above all that we ask or think [you cannot in your thought reach God's power to bestow and to do for us], according to the power that worketh in us"—not a far-off dream of a heavenly life, but a present realization, because the power that does it is working in us now. It is the same power, as that Epistle tells you, that raised Christ from the lowest depths of death, passed him through all ranks and orders of being, and never ceased the exertion of its

energies until it had set him at God's right hand, in the highest place in the universe. That is how he thinks and feels and prays, and that is what he means to do for these common people, the converts to the faith of Christ; that is what he puts into this prayer: "That you may know his will, walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing." Increasing, increasing day by day! Do you know any more to-day than you did yesterday? If you do not, then "I have lost a day," as the old heathen emperor said.

There is still another thing in Paul's mind: "That ye may be empowered with all strength, according to his glorious might, according to the might of his glory"—a might that befits his glory. When you read that, you are thinking about heroic undertakings, vast Christian enterprises that require extraordinary outlays of power; and you feel as if you were going to draw from the magazine of divine resources these immense impulses and these mighty agencies by which the world—the worlds—are to be shaken. No, no! That is not it. When you come to look at it, you will be surprised. We have to be strengthened, empowered with all strength, "according to the might of his glory unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness." That does not sound as though it required such an extraordinary exercise of power. Well, it is a vast deal easier to do some great heroic act on the spur and

under the impulse and inspiration of the moment and of circumstances than it is to plod along, heavily and wearily, through trying conditions of life, with burdens upon you and pain at your heart and longings unsatisfied and no open way before your eyes day after day, through the years of a long life. That is what we are required to do. I have often been most profoundly impressed with that single word of our Lord: "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." For the most part, it is simply a matter of endurance. You can use one great sweep of power for any single act, and men will marvel at it; but to keep at it, even with a far less degree of exertion, day after day, through all the weeks of the years, the muscles wearing out, the nerves giving way, the consciousness of failure pressing upon you every moment, while you do not know what the issue is going to be—it is just there and in that condition of life that you need this divine power for your strengthening. You have to keep that up. I have watched it in many cases. I have seen great things done by men in hours of special endowment, as it seemed, and been disposed to say with the others: "What a great man! how highly honored of God!" Then, on the other hand, I have seen some poor woman, destitute of the comforts of life, laboring under the pressure of sickness, alone because she has suffered all the bereavements of time, looking for nothing better in life than she is enduring

day after day, and bearing it all with just what he says—joyfulness. There is a mightier thing there than the heroism of the battlefield or of any other sphere of effort. That is where we need the power. It takes God's power to do that.

Did you ever think about that in connection with your Lord's incarnate life? I have often thought of it. It must have been the sorest trial to him, with his sensitive nature, with his exquisite holiness, with his keen discernment and thorough understanding of all the passions and impulses of our humanity—it must have been a tremendous trial for him to bear, day after day, with dull, stupid, wooden-headed men, even those that were nearest to him and whom he loved the best. He could not get anything out of them; up to the last they could not understand him. It took the revelation of the Spirit, after he had gone to his Father, to bring them to their senses. He had to bear that thing day after day, night after night, with infinite patience and gentleness, even thanking God that he had such men as these to impart himself and his life to, and going on steadily, the world against him, his best friends not understanding him, and his best hope for himself that he was coming nearer to his end. Power? There never was such a power of endurance in all humanity anywhere in history, and it takes a divine power for that. Your impatience with the world's fret and worry; your disinclination to submit your-

self to the hard conditions and the ungenial associations of life; your unwillingness to come down to the level of the stupidity of men, and their inability to see what is most clear and plain to you; your fretfulness when those things come out before you—all these things are just so many admonitions to you. They tell you that you need a greater power than you have ever known to save you from swamping your own soul in your irritability and impatience; and Paul makes that prayer for you here. If you know God, you will know that he is going to take you through some such course of life as this. If you know his will, if you are filled with the knowledge of his will, you know that some day or other you are going to find your Gethsemane. No, you will get beyond it; you will come to your cross. And you will plod along heavily, day after day, with your cross upon your shoulders and men adding to the burdens continually. Are you going to stand it? How? Ah! unless the Everlasting Arm is underneath and around you, unless you are strengthened with all power according to the might of his glory, there is no hope, you can make nothing out of it, and you will go fretting down to your grave. God may have mercy upon you in the last minute and lift the veil and let you see where you have done wrong and give you a sort of deathbed repentance, but that is the only hope. That is not the Christian life. With such furniture and such provision as this, the



man must go on his way with never a murmur, never a complaint, and never an outcry against God, and never a longing for better conditions, never a demand to be released from the thorn in the flesh, with the prayer, "Thy will be done, not mine." Without this the angels had not come and strengthened him; without it he would have been alone in that tremendous hour. And we, with our littleness and our weakness, can never go through these things unless we are strengthened by the might of his glory. "We can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us."

I cannot do with prayers like this anything like complete work. It must be only a hint, a suggestion. But there is one thing more I wish to touch, and that is thanksgiving. Go through it all. Take the awe-inspiring knowledge, the awful sounding of the abyss of the divine nature; take of it until you feel oppressed and overwhelmed by it. Let it rule your life and inspire it until you have done every good work that is within your reach and your power, and let it impel you to higher effort until you can look God in the face and say: "I know thee, who thou art; the secret name has been whispered to me." Add to it patience and long-suffering, with not simply resignation but joyfulness, and then it is all to be crowned with what to Paul is the very flower of Christian experience, its consummate result—thanksgiving. He seems to regard the atti-

tude of the man toward God in sincere and thorough gratitude as the only befitting one and as the attitude that best fulfills God's purpose for the man. He wants love; he wants gratitude; he wants thanksgiving. When Paul is showing the effect of the gift to the poor of Jerusalem from the Churches, it is not that this is a supply for their need that is best and highest with him. That is true: it is a supply for the need of the people. But more than that: it redounds in thanksgiving to God. I think that is another thing that neither Paul nor his Lord would condone—ingratitude. The Master never stayed his hand because of ingratitude, but he always had in view stirring within the heart of man all the thankfulness that is due; it is a due to God. We cannot do much when we have done our best. A gift to God has little worth to him that hath cattle upon a thousand hills; the wealth of the world is his, and the glory of the stars dims beside the radiance of his person, and the splendors of the heavenly life itself grow pale in his presence. We cannot do much for such as he, but we can do the one thing that he wants. "My son, give me thy heart in thankfulness, in affection, giving thanks [he puts in that word there; it is frequent with Paul, lying at the heart of all his experience] to the Father." If you have such a Father as that, most certainly the well of gratitude ought never to dry up. "The Father who hath made us meet [through this process

of knowledge and activity and patience, under the inspiration and direction of the Spirit of God] to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." What a magnificent concatenation of terms! The inheritance comes to us that way—of the saints, the saintly ones, God's holy ones. That means the very best in God's universe. You will never get a higher order of being than the saints, and they have all the right and title to everything that God has. It has been written and signed and sealed with the blood of the Son of God, and he has sent it to us in ringing tones, proclaimed it to the world: "All things are yours." He has made us meet to be partakers of their inheritance. You never think it of yourself; you cannot crave that saintliness. That is not your line at all; you doubt it; you are afraid of it. But, after all, it is the sweetest, purest kind of life; and it is the loftiest life; it is the strongest life; it is the thing that conquers death, the only thing that cannot be holden of death; and it is the thing that gives us the title to the inheritance incorruptible and undefiled. It is the inheritance of the saints when they come into the light. They are now in the dimness and obscurity and darkness; but when they get into their true place in light, and see things as God sees them and as they cannot be seen now, and find themselves among them, with all the glory of that life about them and ministering to them, then they will know what thanksgiving is due.

And that is what the prayer is for: that you may realize something of that and be thankful for it—just humbly thankful. Shall Paul pray in vain for men? Shall the Church of to-day, after nearly two thousand years of such experience and of such working, fall below the level of his prayers and not even seek to attain to the result of them? Shall we who call upon his name and think ourselves of the higher order of creation, standing at the very top and apex of this whole structure of humanity—shall we let our Bibles and our faith go and keep God at a distance and say, “I desire no more knowledge of thee or thy ways; I know enough of thee?” Is that the way we are going to take God’s plan, Paul’s prayers, Christ’s intercession, the cross? God forbid!

My prayer for you is just a repetition of the apostolic petition that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding; that ye may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing unto the knowledge of God; that ye may be strengthened with power according to the might of his glory, unto all patience and long-suffering, with joyfulness; that ye may be able to give thanks, as ye ought, to him who hath made you meet, by these processes and by the gift of his own Son, and by the power of his Spirit, to be partakers of the best heritage that ever was allotted to God’s creatures—the inheritance of the saints in light.



BS

1117000

2505 Wilson

.W72

The life & mind

of Paul ...

MAR 12 '37

R. H. Shaffer

JAN 11 1946

C. Ferguson

JAN 25 1946

2-45100

11 7000

**UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO**



**48 452 393**

